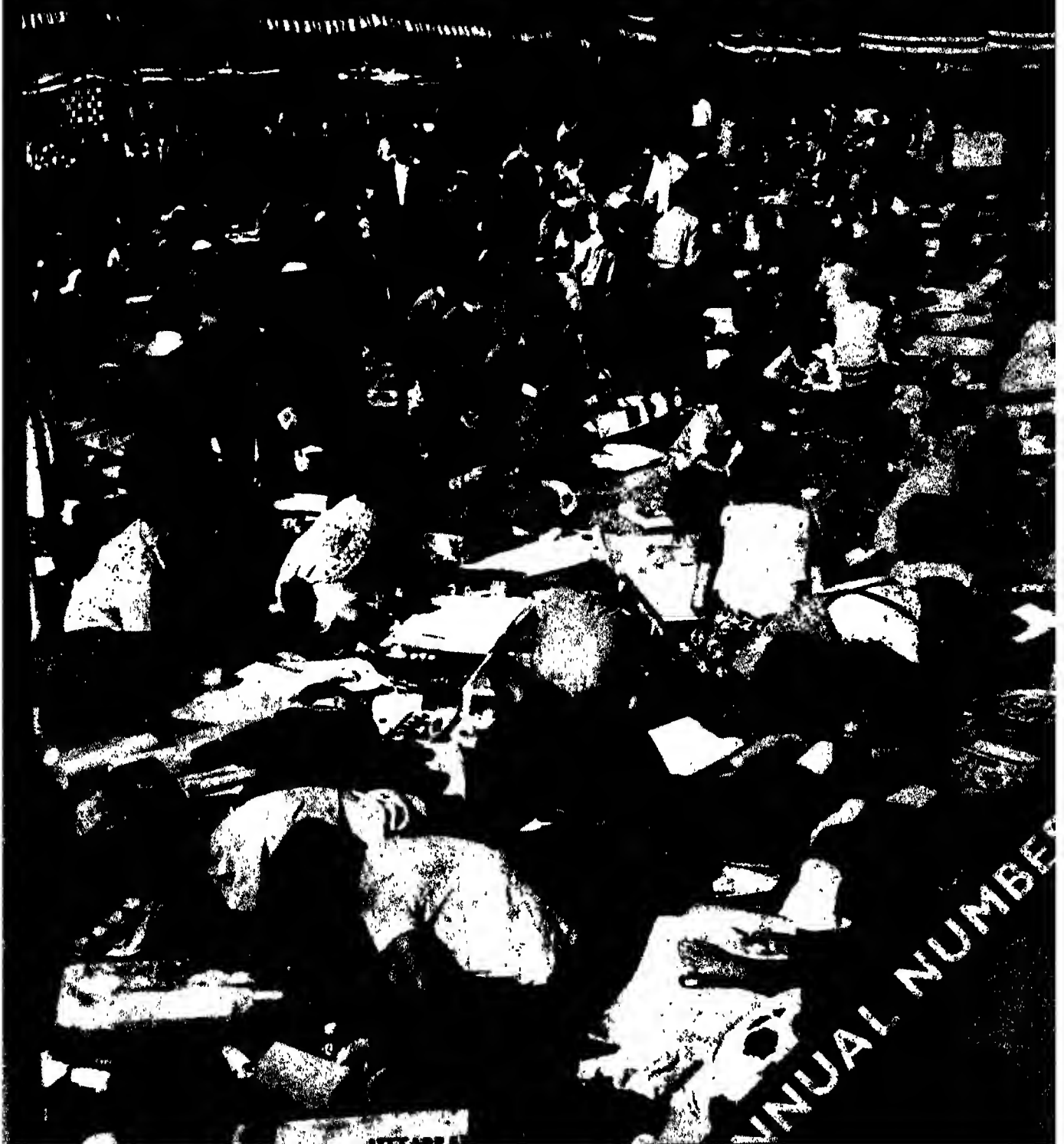


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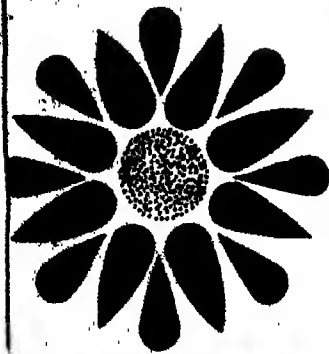
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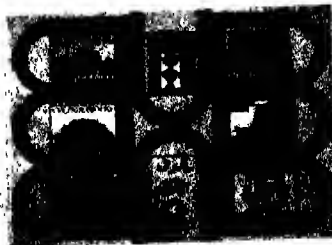
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APRIL 1977 VOL. X NO. 1
PUBLISHED EVERY MONTH

CHILDREN'S World



To Our Readers

IT'S like a birthday...

We've completed nine years, and with this issue—the 270th after we brought out the first one in January 1968—we enter our tenth year of publication.

So, here's our birthday cake—in the shape of this ANNUAL NUMBER. Tell us whether you like it. How we wish we could give you such cakes more often!

Many of you had 'joined' us this day in earlier years, as well. We're sure you will all continue to be with us for many years to come. The more the merrier, they say. So, do bring with you all your friends. If they haven't heard about us yet, please tell them how you became friends with us.

Nine years, in the life of a journal, is a very short period. Like many of you, in the same age, we no longer stumble in our steps. They are steady, sure, and have enough courage to take off on a run.

Come on, let's run together! Be our pace-maker; and put us through our paces.

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Cover: 'Children at Work'—A view of the On-the-Spot Painting Competition (see page 5)

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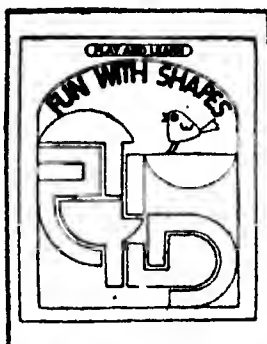
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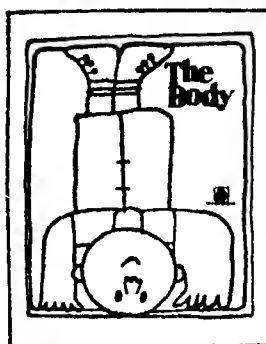


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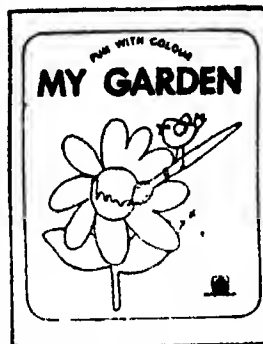


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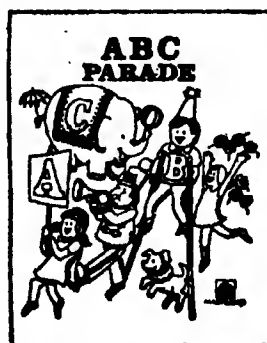


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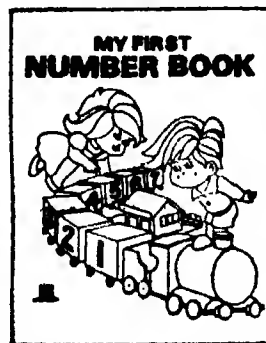


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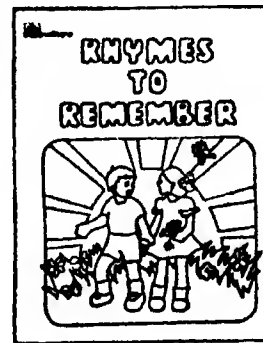
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Adventure with Colours

ARMED with paper, paints, brushes, water bottles, drawing boards, and other such formidable weapons, the children trooped in. There were over 12,000 of them. And they were 'attacking' the topics given to them, at the Shankar's On-the-Spot Painting Competition, held at Modern School grounds, on February 20 last.

They came under three main divisions: the 12-16, 8-12, and the 5-8 age groups.

The 12-16 group was the most organised of the lot. Naturally! They were the 'experienced' ones. Many of them had been through this quite a number of times before. For some, it was the last time they were entering the field. So, with firm determination they approached their topics. And quite a few of them seemed confident of success.

The largest in number were the 8-12 year olds. Excitement was written in their bright eyes and flushed cheeks. With bold strokes, they lashed out on the paper.

The youngest age group, the 5-8 year olds, were the confused ones! Freshers on the field, they had to be guided at every step. Many of them didn't know what to do and ended up doing whatever they pleased—it didn't make a difference whether it was there in the given topics or not. And there were those who got the last minute 'nerves' and deserted the field, crying "Mama"!

After the first half-an-hour or so, they had all taken up their positions. Some were lying flat on their stomach, some were sitting, and there were some who were half-sitting and half-lying!

As the minutes ticked by, the scene became more and more colourful. Red vied with yellow, blue clashed with green, while purple, orange, and brown were often prominent. The remaining colours tried to

make their presence felt, but more often not they were overshadowed by the rest.

And, before one even knew it, it was all over. All that was left on the sprawling grounds were scraps of paper, spilt paints, spilt water, a hankie, the cap of a water bottle, a paint brush—remnants of what, a short while ago, was a scene of colourful activity, or call it adventure!

For the organisers it was a tiring day, but well worth it. Like the children, they too look forward to the next one. And fortunately, like all good things, it is repeated again and again and again—in fact, once a year!

Viswajita Das

(A portfolio of prizewinning paintings from the Competition will appear next month.—Editor)

THE TRUTH DAWNS

The painter sighed awhile—
Looking at
His incomplete work,
Half painted face,
No lips, one ear—
A creation, but not divine.
He backed a few steps and
Looked at the face,
'But sure it is mine!'
He said and sat awhile
And settled for some philosophy—
As he muttered,
'It is better than
The painted nature of
Human life.'

Sandra Mayne (15)
India

BAISHAKHI

New Year for Hindus

THE month of April is here, and also the New Year. You might be thinking, am I mad to be talking of New Year in April? Three months have passed since January 1 and the New Year, and most of us only know about this. But the Hindu New Year starts on the 1st day of Baisakh; the day 'Baishakhi' falls on April 13. This Hindu New Year is celebrated all over India, with local variations.

Every year it brings new hopes and joys and a new message for each of us.

In the north, Baishakhi is also associated with the beginning of the harvesting season. The wheat crop is standing high and erect in the fields. It is no longer green. With the disappearance of winter, the sun has become hotter and has turned the green fields into a golden span. The farmer prays that there should be no rain or hailstorm at this time of the year. His 'treasure' is still in the fields. He is hoping for plenty and prosperity when this crop goes into his granary. Thinking of all this, and looking at the ripened wheat, his joy knows no bounds. He wants to sing and dance and let the whole world know that he is happy. Before starting to cut the crop, the propitiates his gods to bless him, so that the New Year should be an auspicious one, bringing prosperity to him and his family, to his relatives and friends.

The people wear colourful dresses and, along with their families, go to the river-side where the Baisakhi fair is generally held. They meet their friends, chat with them, buy toys and sweets, and after a day of festivities return home.

In Bengal, the 1st day of Baishakh is celebrated as the New Year. People worship their family deities. They put on new clothes and go out to watch a programme of music or dance or a 'Jatra'. These Jattras are open air theatres in which scenes from

the Ramayana or the Mahabharata are enacted. Something peculiar to Bengal is that traders close their old account books, and open new accounts on this day. In all other parts of India, this custom is followed on Diwali day.

Down south in Kerala, the 1st of 'Medom' ushers in the New Year. It is called 'Vishu'. The previous night, the family deities are arranged in a room. A mirror is also placed along with them. In front of these are kept, in a silver plate, a coconut, bananas, rice, jackfruit, a ripe mango, some vegetables, betel leaves, arecanut, yellow flowers etc. One of the elders wakes up the other inmates before dawn. They are asked to close their eyes and helped to enter the puja room and they open their eyes on these 'auspicious' items. Of course, they also see their own image in the mirror! Before they leave the room, the eldest in the family places a silver coin in their right palm. This is a symbolical blessing for prosperity and good luck. By first setting your eyes on so many good things also signifies that you will continue to see these things the year round. The children in the family then fire crackers, while the elders watch them in their fun and frolic, with a new hope and joy in the New Year. Sweets and special dishes are prepared and partaken with relish in celebration of the New Year.

In Tamilnadu, too, April 13 marks the New Year. Special 'pujas' are done, special dishes are made and relished in a happy and joyous mood, with everyone wishing each other happy and prosperous times.

April, in a way, is also New Year for "Children's World". So, to all our readers, let me wish you a very happy and good time.

M. M. Puri

POEMS

From Here and There

TODAY'S WORLD

What is today's world?
Is it what it ought to be?
It is a world of violence,
But not what it used to be.
It is a world of hatred,
Of hearts full of envy,
And people killing each other,
To be what the other should be.

Swarna Rajagopalan (11)
India

GOOD DAYS ARE GONE

The good days are gone—
Good days they used to be,
When everybody
Loved one another
There was no hatred between people,
The good days are gone.
Work was shared by everybody,
Men built houses,
Boys helped in grazing,
Girls helped their mothers,
In the house and in the gardens,
The good days are gone.
The good days are gone,
When children stayed by the fire,
Listening to stories
From mummies and grannies,
Things now have changed,
All by civilization,
Now we can't listen
To stories from parents,
The good days are gone.
To hell with civilization,
Now we can't cooperate,
Otherwise money will be paid
For our lives to be destroyed,
Because we don't love one another—
The good days are gone.

Charles Murivki (15)
Kenya

LOST IN A WORLD OF DARKNESS

Nothing to see except darkness,
Like a night without a moon,
Darkness forms around you like a thick
fog,

Lost in a world of night.
I like to sit and think of colours,
As they whirl around in my mind,
All those things I miss, like
The pink of a rose,
The blue of the sky,
And the green of the grass.

Karem Selway (11)
New Zealand

THE TOWN CHILD

My home is in the town
In a street,
It is crowded with heavy traffic
And feet;
There are buses, motors and lorries
And bicycles;
But there are no meadows
And lambs.
The houses all built
In a row.
There is smoke wherever
I go.
I dislike the noises
I hear———
I wish there were woods
Nearby.
There is only one thing
That I love most,
And that is the sky
Far above.
There is plenty of room
In the blue,
For castles of clouds
And me, too!

Woo Lok Beng (15)
Malaysia

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

MY WEEK

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

THE week starts with Monday, Blue Monday.

But I like Monday.

On Monday we have Arts. I like to draw very much. I draw with water colours crayons, and sometimes I make a picture with paper. That is called a collage. I can draw anything I can think of, a house, trees, flowers, an elephant, a crocodile.



Yes, I can draw a crocodile, too.

I can draw better than Mina, better than Mohan, too. Mohan says he is better than Picasso. But I don't think so, nor does the teacher.

The teacher shakes her head and says, "Mohan Singh, we don't want a modern picture, we just want a butterfly."

"But this is a modern butterfly," says Mohan.

We all start to giggle a little bit. That makes Mohan very angry. He takes his drawing and tears it up. Then he takes the paint and throws it at Krishan Gupta.

Krishan gets up and shakes his fist under his nose and shouts, "I'll blow your nose in, if you are not careful."

Mohan Singh is not careful. He keeps on throwing paint at Krishan Gupta's white uniform. He is about to blow Mohan's nose in, when the teacher reaches them.

"Sit down, Mohan," she says, "and apol-

ogize to Krishan."

So Mohan Singh sits down and murmurs something which sounds like "Sorry", and starts painting modern again.

I like Monday, for Monday we have Art class.

I LIKE Tuesday, for on Tuesday we have sports.

We jump and play ball and catch each other. "Hol!" cried Mohan the other day, "nobody can catch me. You can try very hard, but nobody will ever catch me."

"That's what you think," Krishan Gupta replied and jumped at him. But Mohan was as fast as the wind. He turned round and ran away. Krishan Gupta bumped straight into Govind Kaushal, who shook his head and laughed. "Hey! I am not Mohan Singh; let me go."

"Wait," cried Krishan Gupta, "I will catch you, you will see."

But by that time Mohan Singh had crossed nearly the whole school yard. He was hiding behind a tree and shouted, "Hullo, catch me!"

"Come on!" said Krishan Gupta. "Follow me, all of you. We have to catch him."

We followed Mohan Singh zigzag over the yard. We followed him around a tree



once, twice, and three times. We followed him out of one gate and in through the other. But, somehow, we could not get hold of him. So, I hid myself behind a tree and waited for Mohan to pass by. When he passed by my hiding place, I followed him and caught him.

"Hurrah! Hurrah!" everybody cried. Even Mohan Singh laughed and said, "That was very clever of you, Monisha."

Yes, I like Tuesdays, for Tuesdays we have a lot of fun.

BUT Wednesday, I don't like Wednesday. Because we always have a test that day, either in science, spellings, or modern mathematics. I am not very good at spellings.

Last Wednesday was the worst Wednesday I can remember.

We had a spelling test again. I did not study the day before, since I went to Guddi's birthday party. I did not know a single word.

"Hey, Mina," I whispered, "how do you spell 'chariot'?"

Mina whispered something, but I could not hear.

So I leaned a little towards her and asked her again.

This time she whispered louder. I could hear her, but so could the teacher.

"What is that?" she asked and came towards us. "Get up," she told me. I got up. I felt very, very ashamed. I nearly started to cry. I had to stand in a corner, next to the blackboard, for 15 minutes.

I wished I would be better at spellings.



I will study a little harder to know the spelling of 'chariot,' but it is very difficult. I wish there wouldn't be anything like spelling. Then, I would like Wednesday, too.

BUT Thursday. I love Thursday. On Thursday, we have poetry class.



I love poems. Not many in our class do. Madan Goklani does not.

He says he hates poems. He can never learn a poem by heart. If he is asked to recite, he just stands up, puts his hands behind his back, and looks at the ground.

"Well?" the teacher asks, but he does not speak. When the teacher turns her back, he makes all sorts of faces. He even shakes his fist at her.

We all start to laugh, and Mina giggles so much that she gets hiccups.

The teacher turns and asks, "Well?"

Immediately everybody is quiet.

Madan stops his violent faces, Mina stops her hiccups, and we stop our laughter.

I love poems. Some are like music, so beautiful.

Sometimes, if I feel like it, I write my own poems. How do you like this one?

Only Madan Goklani does not listen. He pulls Mina's plaits and whispers, "If you say a word, I'll cut your plaits off!" and he shows her his little scissor from the side.

Mina becomes red in the face. Madan Goklani pulls her plaits very hard.

"Stop it!" Mina whispers.

But he pulls even harder.

Finally, Mina cannot bear it any longer. She raises her hand.

"Yes?" asks the teacher.

"May I be excused?" whispers Mina and gets up.

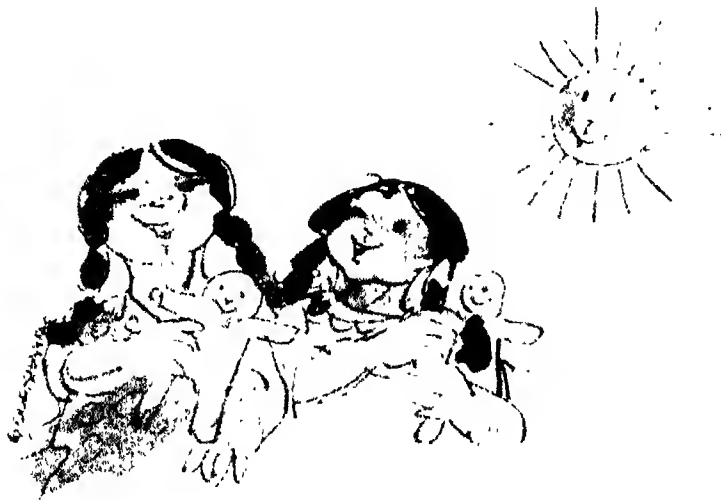
The teacher looks up from the book and sees Madan Goklani take my plaits, threatening to cut them. Just for fun, just for fun! What fun!

"Madan Goklani," the teacher says, "what is it?"

Now it is Madan Goklani who drops his head and stops laughing.

He has to write a hundred times: "I shall not play with a scissor, not at home, nor at school."

It will take him quite sometime to finish it.



"But, Mina," says the teacher astonished, "class is nearly over."

Watching Mina's eyes fill with tears, she adds, "All right, go."

Madan Goklani grins after her.

The teacher continues with the story. Madan Goklani laughs and grins even more and shows the scissor to Mohan Singh. He swings it over his head and cuts the air.

Now everybody looks at him and giggles.

Then, I hope, he will stop teasing us on Saturdays, when we would like to listen to the story our teacher reads to us.

●
SUNDAY. I love Sunday. We all love Sunday. On Sunday we have a holiday. We don't have to go to school. Hoy do you like Sunday? Better than Monday? Good, so do I.

Sigrun Srivastava

PARTED but UNITED

THE first impression visitors receive at the Broken Hill School of the Air is one of emptiness. There are no children!

But when classes are in session and radio calls are coming in from an area as large as the British Isles, that impression disappears. It takes only a few minutes to feel the spirit and the sense of comradeship which overcomes the barriers of distance.

Children hundreds of kilometres apart know each other and their teachers—by radio.

The Broken Hill School of the Air, in the far west of New South Wales, is typical of the 12 such schools which bring lessons by radio to more than 1,000 primary school children living in remote regions of the Australian continent.

The Broken Hill School's badge shows a radio transmitting tower and bears the motto "Parted But United".

Its principal, Miss Helen Pollard, believes the motto is very apt. "The children very quickly develop a feeling of friend-

Gathered around the radio are Mary Vagg (11) and sister and brothers at Wing Ding Station, outside Ivanhoe in New South Wales. It is 'assembly' time, the first session of the day on the School of Air when everybody listens in.



ship and cooperation, even though they may live more than 1,000 kilometres apart," she said.

Broken Hill is a mining city of almost 30,000 people, 1,170 km (725 miles) west of Sydney and is the major population centre in the region.

In 1976 the school had 150 students, who lived at 85 cattle and sheep stations (ranches) and at remote prospecting camps and other tiny settlements, some of them in the border regions of Queensland and South Australia. Its farthest pupil was more than 1,000 km (620 miles) by road from the school.

"Radio plays an important role in their lives," Miss Pollard said. "While they use it five days a week for school work, it is also their link with the flying doctor and often with their neighbours. It allows them to take part in social experiences and to be helped immediately with subjects like music, language, art, poetry, and drama."

The School of the Air opens its sessions at 9.30 a.m. every school day, relaying its lessons through one of the transmitters operated by the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

The pupils use small but powerful transceivers supplied by the Department of Education.

Familiar theme music tells each pupil that school has begun, and then the teacher greets them. Everyone sings a hymn together before the teacher proceeds to the day's timetable and to announcements.

There follows a varied programme of classes, and no two days of the week are the same.

Poetry readings are followed by drama lessons in which pupils take different parts, coming in unprompted on cue. In news monitor sessions, selected students summarise events in Australia and overseas. Home news allows children to tell their

teachers and one another of recent happenings on their station—the birth of a foal, the purchase of a car. One important lesson is music, and a large number of the children play recorders supplied by their parents association.

Thursdays are “birthday day”, when anyone who has had a birthday describes the gifts received and the party she or he had.

“One little boy is still waiting to come to town so that he can use the soccer ball and boots he got recently,” Miss Pollard said.

For drama, the children are encouraged to dress up for the part they are playing, even though the only audience might be their parents and their pets.

The results have been worth the effort. The school has been responsible for developing self-confidence in children who, because of isolation, are sometimes very shy and tend to lack poise and self-assurance.

For the teachers, their reaction to the special type of teaching is mixed.

“I miss children around me,” said one teacher.

The teachers broadcast from a room the size of a normal classroom, complete with blackboard, piano, teacher’s desk, chairs, and walls well decorated with posters and children’s drawings.

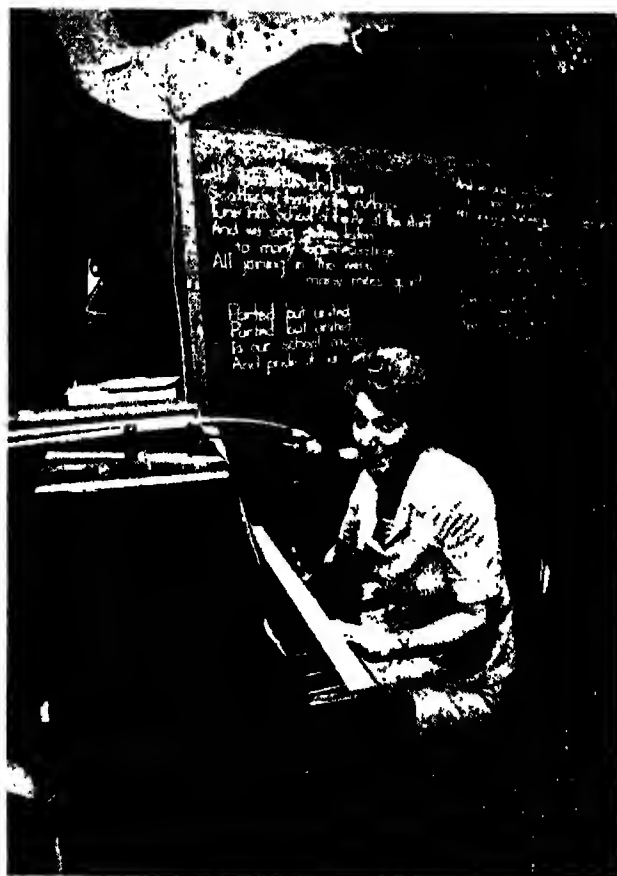
But the only company they have is another teacher acting as the radio panel operator in the next room.

Only if some of the pupils are visiting Broken Hill with their parents—a practice encouraged by the school—do they have children present.

The teacher’s desk carries a large radio console, with microphones at the desk and at the piano.

To help teachers develop the social aspects of their pupils’ education, the school organises get-togethers, called mini-school, three times a year.

These are usually held on a selected station, where the woolshed becomes the classroom and where the children can play



This is Principal Helen Pollard conducting a radio class from her empty classroom.

together and take part in art, drama, poetry, reading, and other group activities.

One typical station is Wing Ding, about 480 km (300 miles) by road east of Broken Hill, and 75 km (47 miles) from the nearest town, Ivanhoe, which has a population of 500.

The station covers almost 170,000 acres and is 64 km (40 miles) from end to end. The nearest neighbouring homestead is 20 km (13 miles) away.

Mr. Robert Vagg and his wife, Anne, have six of their nine children living with them at Wing Ding—two of the older girls are at university and a son is at high school.

Of the six, five are School of the Air pupils. Helen, aged three, will join kindergarten as soon as she is old enough.

Mrs. Vagg is the supervisor, and she has her hands full on school days, making sure the five are ready with their lessons when their class comes on the air.



Drama classes often mean dressing up, even though the only audience will be the family members and family pets. Here Brian Vagg (8), of Wing Ding Station, dresses up for his part in a school play, while his brother, Phillip (10), holds the microphone for him.

She also makes sure that the children get the most out of other education aids the School of the Air sends—film strips and projectors, tape cassettes, educational games, library books, work materials such as crayons and paints, and the school magazine, *Over To You*.

Mrs. Vagg said only one child worked at the radio at any one time, except for school assemblies, when all the pupils were expected to be on air.

The radio sessions provide a welcome change from the sets of correspondence work, which arrive each week by mail truck from Ivanhoe and are dropped at Wing Ding's mail box, 18 km (11 miles) from the homestead. One of the older children, Mary 11, Phillip, 10, or Brian, 8, rides a motorcycle to the box to pick up the mail.

School of the Air pupils return their finished work to Broken Hill for checking by their own teachers.

Mrs. Vagg said demands of station life sometimes meant distraction from school-work. "With labour costing so much, Robert relies on the children to help with the chores around the place. That's why the older ones are able to ride the agricultural motorcycles and drive the light trucks.

"We have about 10,000 sheep, 500 cattle, eight dogs, 15 cats, 10 dairy cattle, six horses, and a couple of thousand kangaroos on Wing Ding, so there's plenty to do.

"We all help with mustering stock and daily chores like milking, but usually we can schedule the work so that lessons don't suffer.

"But sometimes when something unexpected comes up, the children drop their schoolbooks and take off on the motorcycles."

Murray McMillan

(Courtesy: Australian Information Dept.)

MINUTES TO HOLIDAYS

Today is the very last day,
Of school—and soon holidays!
It's just a matter of minutes,
But yet I feel them infinite.

Ding Dong goes the bell
And here we set up a huge yell!
For not many like school
Some even play the fool!

You may ask—"How do you know?"
Well, I come for that very reason—sol

*Varsha Oak
India*



MISS RABBIT had eloped with Mr. Hare — that bouncer next door. And, of course, Mr. Elephant knew about it way ahead of the others.

Elephant knew why Miss Deer had looked startled; and why Mrs. Crocodile had shed tears. In fact, Elephant knew almost everything that went on. And very often he could foretell things that would happen!

He would slyly slink about the animal kingdom, spying and eavesdropping on each and every creature. He was so very nosy that he felt that everybody's business was *his* business. He even thought that being a successful nosey-parker was an art!

"There is nothing that I don't know," he would boast. "There is absolutely nothing that anyone can hide from me." And as if just snooping were not enough, he soon began to meddle in everybody's affairs. He advised, he scolded, and sometimes he even bullied the animals into doing what *he* felt was good for them. Then, after doing so, he charged them for his guidance and help!

The animals lived in constant fear of him. "Not only does he snoop and interfere, but his guidance charges are so

high!" they wailed to each other. But there seemed to be nothing that the animals could do to stop him. Elephant knew this and became more and more brazen.

Things came to a head, one day, when Elephant tried to blackmail Mr. Fox. Fox was Minister of Chicken-feed in the court. He had to see to it that the chickens were well fed and, certainly, they looked healthier. But what no one knew was that, in the bargain Fox, too, was better fed! He had eggs for breakfast, chicken for lunch, eggs for dinner, and eggs whenever he felt like having a snack! Elephant somehow got wind of this happening. He knew that Fox would be removed from office if the king came to know what a crook he was. So Elephant was now trying to blackmail Fox.

The God of the animals, who saw everything, was disgusted. He felt that Fox was bad, but that Elephant was worse. There still seemed to be hope for Fox, but none at all for Elephant. For, there seemed to be no limit to Elephant's misdeeds. His boldness and misbehaviour seemed to be increasing day by day. The God of the animals felt that the time had come when something had to be done to curb Elephant's meddlesome activities.

So, while Elephant was still trying to blackmail Fox, a voice was heard from above. It said: "Elephant! You have caused a lot of suffering to those around you. You have been interfering in other creatures' affairs. From now onwards, every time you spy on others, your nose will grow a little longer and your ears will become a little bigger. So that, as soon as anyone sees you, he will know what a snoop animal you are. And not only that, in size, too, you will become bigger and heavier till the day comes when the very ground will shake under your weight, as you walk upon it. You will no longer be able to creep up on others. Unless, of course, you change your ways. Remember! You have been warned!"

For a moment, Fox and Elephant stared at each other, unable to say a thing.

Then Elephant burst out laughing. "Imagine the earth moving under my feet, when I am such a tiny little creature," he said and continued to laugh. He thought that the whole thing was a big joke.

However, Elephant soon realised that it wasn't a joke. For, every time he meddled into others' business, his ears became a little bigger, his nose became a little longer, and he himself became a little larger! Elephant tried very hard to stop his snooping activities. But old habits die hard, and by the time Elephant had stopped completely, he looked very different from his former self. His ears had grown very big, his nose had grown very long, and in size he had become enormous!

And that is how we find elephants today!

V. Das

AN ADVENTURE

I WAS visiting the famous Corbett National Park along with my family. We reached there at noon. After lunch and a little rest, we went to see the game sanctuary.

We were going in our car. It went slowly along the mud roads which led deep into the forest. We saw monkeys, deer, and a lonely baby bear. I wanted to catch the bear, and asked my dad to stop the car. I got out and ran towards it, but it ran away into the forest.

Then we continued our journey to see more animals. Suddenly, one of the tyres burst. We all got down from the car and were standing near it while the wheel was being attended to. Then we heard an elephant approaching us. It stopped near our car and looked at us for a minute. Then it slowly came towards the car. It picked up

the tyre lying on the ground and went into the forest. We were bewildered as to what we should do, when we saw the elephant coming back with a new tyre! It placed the tyre in front of my dad. He immediately fitted it on the wheel and we all got in. Dad started the car, but it would not move. On seeing this, the elephant came from behind the car and gave it a push. I almost fell forward, but my mother caught me. For one moment, I closed my eyes, not wanting to imagine what would happen next.

Well, there was nothing more to happen, for when I opened my eyes, I found my mother shaking me up, and shouting at me to get up from bed.

It was all a dream, and I had overslept that hot summer afternoon.

*Harl Priya (8)
India*

THE MARAUDER OF GORAKHPUR-III

EARLY one morning, on a summer day, in the village of Tiwari, in the Terai region, a man was going to the temple. On his way, he had to cross a jungle trail through tall 'sal' trees, where a marauding lion had created terror seven years earlier. However, no maneater had since been noticed or notified, much to the villagers' relief.

The devout continued on his way immersed in his thoughts. He found a large rock obstructing his path, so he skirted it through the bushes, when suddenly he saw a tiger in front of him, yawning noisily, a few yards away. He quickly turned tail and ran as fast as he could, forgetting the temple. On the way, he ran into Lakhanram, who asked him what was wrong and was told about the tiger in the vicinity.

Now Lakhanram remembered the havoc played on his livestock by the 'Marauder of Gorakhpur-I' (See *Children's World*, September 1976), and decided that this must not be allowed to happen again. So, he got hold of his rifle and set out to track down the tiger. He became rather wary as he neared the rock described to him, but climbed over it stealthily and looked around for the tiger. There was no animal in sight and Lakhanram wondered where the tiger had gone. He remained perched on the rock for quite sometime, when a village lad came up running to say that the tiger had been sighted in Lakhanram's wheat fields.

He climbed down from the rock quickly and hastened after the village boy. Back in his fields, he began swinging his rifle at the stalks of wheat to make the tiger betray its presence—and it did. Its siesta disturbed, the tiger rose suddenly from nowhere and charged. Lakhanram, who had his gun ready, took a prone position on the ground and fired at the charging beast. In the next instant, the tiger stopped in apparent mid-air, landed on all fours—with a look of surprise on its face, and its eyes began closing; as its jaw fell slack, its chin hit the

ground with a thud. Lakhanram mistook this to be the end of the tiger. He decided to wait till the next day for skinning it, as most of his farmhands had by then already gone home.

But early next morning, when Lakhanram returned to the fields, all he saw at the spot was a patch of congealed blood—but no tiger. Lakhanram was perplexed; he could not understand how a mortally wounded tiger, which had bled so much, got away. Presently, he realised that if the wounded tiger survived and recovered, it would turn into a ferocious maneater and return to Tiwari one day and ravage it, like the previous marauder.

He quickly warned the villagers and also sent word to Mr. Evans, the new Forest Reserve Officer. Evans was a keen 'shikari', only too glad to help in eliminating the tiger. It was he who had nabbed the Marauder—II (see *Children's World*, November 1976) earlier. Unfortunately, before Evans could complete his preparations and come, there came a report of a woman being mauled by a tiger. She survived miraculously and lived to relate her terrible experience. She was cutting stalks of wheat when she felt thirsty and stood up to go towards a well. Just then, something silently pounced on her. She screamed and fell on her back, and then saw a tiger and noticed that its neck had a bullet hole surrounded by congealed blood where a scar was forming. The tiger came back and glared at her, with its lips drawn back baring its teeth, but it was making no sound. Hearing her terror-stricken screams, another farmhand nearby rushed to her rescue, by throwing his sickle at the crouching beast and thus driving it away.

When Lakhanram heard this story, he felt like kicking himself for having been such a bad shot! By this time Evans arrived, and the villagers crowded around to beseech



him to save them from the tiger. But when Lakhanram gave him fuller details of the animal, Evans shook his head, saying, "How can one kill a dumb tiger who gives no warning of his arrival and departure?" Both contemplated the situation for a long time and finally agreed on a plan.

If the tiger was a maneater, unable to prey on animals, then one way to deal with it was to weaken it further by starvation. To achieve this, the village folk agreed that the livestock pens would be constantly guarded and that the people themselves would not come out of their houses between sunset and sunrise. Moreover, one half of the village would be patrolled by Lakhanram, and the other half by Evans and his spaniel, Bullet, every night.

In spite of these precautions, the tiger claimed yet another victim. The beast had one evening climbed on top of an isolated hut on the outskirts, scratched a hole through the thatched roof and, with its powerful paws, had dragged out a screaming child. Again, the animal had uttered no sound.

In this way, the tiger continued his depredations undaunted. Before long, almost every family in the village had one or more of their dear ones lost to the tiger. In the meanwhile, Evans was desperately trying to find an effective solution. Lakhanram's growing despondency at all this human suffering did not also help in evolving a strategy. However, the night vigils continued.

Early one moonlit night, Lakhanram got up from his verandah and, leaving his gun behind, strolled out onto the courtyard. He had a queer feeling that something was



wrong that night, though he could not pinpoint what it was. As he continued to stroll towards the gate, the thought that he might not live to see the morning grew stronger. Although he kept walking, a cold sweat broke out on his face. Through the corner of his eye, he caught sight of an elongated body creeping low from the left towards him. He turned and rushed for his gun, but before he could enter his gate, the tiger silently pounced on him and with a heavy blow, like that of a sledge-hammer, on his cranium, felled him to the ground. As the dumb tiger prepared to grab Lakhanram by the neck, a strong flashlight dazzled its eyes and it abandoned its victim and fled.

It was Evans who had fortuitously come that way and was able to scare the tiger away—but, alas, Lakhanram had already breathed his last. The dumb maneater had taken his revenge.

Next morning, Evans with a heavy heart pushed his way through the crowd of mourners at Lakhanram's house and knelt beside his friend's body. Making the sign of the cross, he resolved, "This dumb tiger shall not get away alive from me." After Lakhanram's cremation was over, Evans unfolded his plans. As it was to be his last night in Tiwari, he obtained a doll and placed it in a sitting position in one of the huts. He tied his spaniel outside, knowing that it would bark when the tiger could be seen approaching. For himself, Evans prepared a comfortable hide-away under a bedstead inside the hut, from where he could easily get a clear view of the doorway—the door having been left ajar.

Around 10 o'clock, when the moon was shining bright, the tiger's arrival was announced by Bullet's frenzied barking. Evans rechecked his loaded rifle. Surprisingly, the tiger ignored the spaniel and silently made its way through the door of the hut. Inside, it saw a child sitting on a table—the decoy—and sprang at it. Evans, who had prepared for just such an opportunity shot the tiger at close range. A loud bang reverberated through the hut, and a small red patch appeared where the bullet pierced the tiger's head. Its wide open mouth emitted no sound, and as it spun round to escape, it fell down dead just outside the door.

By the time Evans came out, he saw Bullet, his faithful dog, standing astride the dead tiger's stretched out body barking contentedly. An examination of the maneater revealed that the earlier wound in its neck had severed its vocal chords. Although the wound had healed, it had rendered the beast voiceless. This had also made it a maneater, as feared by Lakhanram.

Evans was thus able to make Tiwari a safer place for the poor villagers to live in, and derive satisfaction at having done a deed that badly needed doing.

Shiv Dhawan (14) India

(This series concluded)

The Vanishing Indian Wolf

IT is now common knowledge that the lion and tiger in India are in danger of extinction. However, many may not know that the Indian wolf is also becoming rarer, day by day.

The various sub-species of this canine range worldwide from North America to Europe and Asia. In India, it is found in the desert and semi-desert areas of peninsular India, besides Ladakh.

Wolves live in open country, and live on any animal or bird they can overpower. They are known to live on blackbuck and chinkara. In Ladakh, wolves feed on marmots, hares, wild goats, and sheep. In most areas wolves have taken to killing domestic animals, because of the virtual disappearance of natural prey. This brings them in direct conflict with man's interests.

The Indian wolf is now confined to a few small pockets of its former range. The Melkote Wildlife Sanctuary in Karnataka was established with the objective of sheltering the dwindling wolf population. It extends over 5,000 hectares (50 sq. km).

The wolf has now been listed in the 'Red Book', which consists of the flora and fauna in danger. In spite of protection by law, the destruction of the wolf continues in India. Unless this can be stopped, the Indian wolf will become extinct. This will, indeed, be a tragedy.

*Mahesh Rangarajan (13)
India*

WOMEN OF COURAGE-4:



THE turnkeys of Newgate prison were horrified when two ladies, carrying bundles of clothes, came to the gates one day, in 1813, and asked to be admitted. The wretched, depraved female prisoners would tear the clothes off their backs and they might never get out alive, they warned the ladies.

But Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845) would not take "no" for an answer. Presently, a mob of dirty, desperate women milled around her and her sister, Hannah, screeching and fighting, until something in the quiet, gentle demeanour of the visitors, in their plain Quaker dresses and white bonnets, calmed them down.

Prison conditions at that time were probably

worse than ever before and, after the prisoners had shown them round, Elizabeth knew that prison reform must be her mission in life. However, domestic difficulties, the birth of her 9th and 10th children, and the death of another, came in the way, and it was not until four years later that she could tackle it.

Herself one of 12 children, Elizabeth Gurney had led a happy, comfortable childhood in Norwich. Since her father's brand of Quakerism was less austere than that of many of the other followers, she had, as a young girl, been able to wear pretty clothes, take dancing lessons, and even attend the theatre and the opera.



IT was only after she had heard a particularly compelling speaker at a Friends Meeting that the fun-loving 18-year-old girl discovered her own religious leaning. Even so, it took a whole year for her to abandon her gay clothes for the sober attire of a Quaker when she married Joseph Fry in 1800.

As the wife of a wealthy Quaker merchant, Elizabeth was always busy—entertaining, looking after her growing family, nursing sick relatives, preaching at Quaker meetings; yet she had time to work among the poor of the London slums and the gypsies who camped near the Fry's country-house.

Following Elizabeth's first visit to Newgate, her

brother-in-law, Fowell Buxton, had managed to obtain some minor reforms. When she returned in 1817, contrary to the turnkeys' warning, the women failed to molest her or steal her watch; they responded warmly when she comforted a tiny child, not heeding his filthy condition.

Elizabeth had already had experience of starting schools. Surrounded by children who were compelled to live in the foul prison with their mothers, she now decided that her first step would be to open a prison school. She soon picked out their schoolmistress, a quiet girl, who had almost certainly been wrongly convicted of theft.

ELIZABETH FRY



TOGETHER, the visitor and the prisoners drew up a set of rules to put before the prison governor. His objections were finally worn down by Elizabeth's obstinacy and charm. One day, she found some women outside the school room begging to be let in. They wanted to learn to read and write, too, or at least to have some work.

Despite the discouragement by her own men-folk, Elizabeth formed a Ladies' Newgate Committee. With the help of these volunteers, a work-room was established in Newgate, where the inmates received some elementary education and made attractive patchwork quilts, for which there was a great demand in the colony of New South Wales.

So impressed were the authorities by these changes that they adopted them as part of the prison system. In this difficult post-war period of great social changes, crime was on the increase and Elizabeth's reforms attracted considerable public attention. Her two eldest daughters proudly acted as her secretaries, dealing with her enormous correspondence.

The plight of women sentenced to deportation now became Elizabeth's major concern. She persuaded the prison governor to replace the open wagons with closed hackney carriages for the ride to the docks, and visited 106 transport ships over the years, inspecting conditions and always saying farewell to the prisoners before they sailed.



ELIZABETH'S quiet courage must often have appeared like fearlessness, but this was far from the truth. As a child, she was desperately afraid of the dark and retained a loathing for the sea and a fear of death, yet she frequently braved tempestuous seas in small open boats in order to board transports.

Her shyness, too, made it quite an ordeal when she became the first woman, other than a queen, to appear before a House of Commons Committee, to give her views on prisons. Her ideas were years ahead of her time. She wanted women's prisons staffed by women, and the abolition of solitary confinement and capital punishment.

When a financial crisis brought bankruptcy to her

husband, Elizabeth found that their simpler life left her more time for work among prisoners and lunatics, too. An American ambassador, who attended one of her bible readings at Newgate, coupled it with St. Paul's Cathedral as the two greatest sights in London.

In her later years, although travelling tired her greatly, she was always on the move, for her reforms were being copied not only throughout Britain but abroad as well. She received invitations to advise on prison reform in France, Germany, Holland, Denmark, and Belgium, and was greatly loved wherever she went.

(Courtesy: BIS)



A SPECIAL HOLIDAY

YET another day at school was over. Anjali picked up her bag and dashed out of the classroom, right into the stern face of Miss Menon.

"I am sorry, Miss," she apologised, without meaning it. She never did like the old crab. And, anyway, she would never understand her excitement to run home fast. Mayan was coming home today from his boarding school. Mayan was Anjali's elder brother, and he was her hero.

In fact, as she hastened her footsteps towards home, she felt irritated with so many people. First, with Mummy, because she wouldn't let her take a day off. "He is going to be here for a month," her Mummy had reasoned. What was the use of arguing? She would never understand how Anjali felt. Secondly, she was angry with her class-teacher. Why today, of all the days, did she have to burden them with so much homework? Anyway, she would ask Mayan to help her. He always knew everything. And she was wild with Roopa, her best friend, who refused to lend her her history notes. "Serves you right for day-dreaming in class," she had scoffed.

To hell with everything, Anjali decided. Ten minutes more of walking and she would be home. And Mayan must have already arrived. These holidays they would again have great fun. They had already planned lots of nice things to do during his visit home. Their last few letters were full of wonderful ideas. 'Oh, why is my house so far?' Anjali grumbled, tugging at her school bag. As she did so, she felt a mild pain on the left side of her stomach. She remembered her Mummy often telling her to walk a bit slowly lest she got a catch. So she told herself to walk less hurriedly. Her

house was just round the corner now. Oh, what fun the holidays are going to be, she beamed to herself. Again, she felt a pain in the same place, more acute this time. And she got a little worried. She was not one to fall ill frequently. So, why this uneasy feeling?

At last, she turned the corner, and could see her house, and the front door open. Mayan must have left it open to welcome her. She began running across the road, yelling out, "Mayan, Mayan, oh——!" and she clutched her stomach, and tumbled to the ground. 'Oh god! this pain is unbearable.' She was really grateful that she had reached home. Mayan came running out hearing her shouting, and she gave him a feeble smile as she tried to get up.

"What is it? What's happened, Anjali? Did you fall?" he asked all at one time, as he helped her up.

"I—I don't know," Anjali gasped. "It's an awful pain I have here," and she pinpointed the spot. Without waiting for any more words, Mayan bodily lifted her up and took her indoors. Their mother, who was sorting out Mayan's clothes, threw everything and rushed out as she saw them. "What has happened to Anjali?" she asked anxiously.

"I think it is appendix," Mayan said as-a-matter-of-factly. He always knew everything. Talk to him about any subject and pat would come the reply. Their mother also gave thought to his 'diagnosis' and decided to call their family doctor. Fortunately, he lived just a few blocks away. So, Mayan ran over and fetched him.

Dr. Mathur gave Anjali a pat on her back and said with a smile, "What have you been up to, young lady? Let's have a quick look at you." Anjali gave a small groan as he poked her at the spot where it pained her. "Yes, my dear, your brother is all set to be a doctor," Dr. Mathur said. "Your appendix has inflamed. Of course, there is nothing to worry about," he assured Anjali's mother, "but it is better if we get it operated as early as possible."

Anjali felt a small stab in her heart when she heard the word 'operation'. And the fear showed on her face. "Now, my dear, if I know you well, you are a brave girl,"

Dr. Mathur told Anjali. "Let me check up if they can take you in tomorrow morning."

Anjali's heart came to her mouth on hearing the urgency of it all. Dr. Mathur rang up the nursing home to which he was attached and booked a room for her. The operation theatre was also booked for 8 a.m. the day after admission. And after reassuring Anjali that she was really going to get a lot of pampering and would enjoy too, Dr. Mathur departed.

"What a way to spend my holidays!" Anjali wailed as she saw Dr. Mathur's car move away. "Especially when Mayan is here. We had planned to do great things. And, now, I have to be operated," and she gave way to a torrent of tears. They were tears of anger. Her holidays were totally spoiled.

Anjali's pampering began rightaway. Her mother hugged her close and said she would only have to be in the nursing home for a few days. She had many more holidays to enjoy herself. And Mayan would be home for two long months.

Mayan was also upset about the news. But he started chatting with Anjali about his school. This was one thing she could listen to for hours without getting bored. Meanwhile, their father was informed about her operation over the phone. When he came home from office, he brought a large cake, all for Anjali. Her pain had also subsided and she felt quite cheerful. Even her friends, who had heard about her, came along to give her company.

By night Anjali was quite tired after the day's excitement. After a glass of hot milk, she was soon fast asleep. She had to reach the nursing home early the next morning. Anjali had a peaceful night.

At 8 a.m. the whole family piled up in the car to go to the nursing home. And how right Dr. Mathur was! Anjali already felt so important. The nursing home was not a crowded tiny place, but one of those old rambling houses converted into a mini-hospital. There was a lovely garden overlooking the rooms. A few visitors were already there waiting to see their dear ones. The familiar figures dressed in white moved about the place silently. "Oh, Anjali, this is a lovely place," Mayan said. "You will

like your stay here." That was just the reassurance she needed. All her doubts and fears vanished immediately. In the office, the smiling, cheerful face of the Matron greeted her. She said, "So, Anjali will be our guest for a few days. But only if you promise not to come back again!" At that, everyone had a good laugh.

Anjali was taken to her room by a cute-looking nurse. It was a nice airy room, and Anjali was soon comfortably settled in the bed. She was told to rest the whole day. The operation would take place the next day. Her Mummy would stay with her, and Mayan was permitted to come during the day.

After sometime, Dr. Mathur breezed in followed by the Matron and a nurse. "So, our young lady has made herself comfortable, I see," he said. "How was the pain in the night?"

"Quite mild," Anjali replied. "In fact, I hardly felt anything."

The nurse took her temperature and blood pressure and noted the figures on a chart. "We'll see you tomorrow morning in the operation theatre. If you need something, call someone from the duty room. Till then, be good!" said Dr. Mathur, and went away.

Anjali had a pile of comics to read. Her

friends had got them along for her. And, there were no restrictions on reading. Especially comics! What fun! No homework, no notes to copy, no Miss Menon for a few days! 'Even the food is lovely. Breakfast in style, with eggs and toast and marmalade and corn flakes. Again, a delicious lunch, with my favourite sweet dish to follow—custard and jelly! Tea with biscuits, and fried fish and chips for dinner. I would not mind staying on for a few days!' Anjali told herself.

With all these lovely things to eat and Mayan for company, the day sped by very fast. They caught up on a lot of news about their schools and their hobbies. Mummy had even remembered to get the transistor along, in case they got bored.

Anjali was given an injection and asked to sleep by 8.30 p.m., to which she agreed promptly. It had been an exciting day!

Early next morning, after the usual check-up, Anjali was wheeled into the operation theatre. Her father and mother and Mayan were there to see her off. Surprisingly, Anjali did not feel very scared. Any way, she would be out in half-an-hour. Dr. Mathur himself was going to operate.

May be that is why half her fear vanished. The operation room was very clean and impressive. She was made to lie down on



the operation table. Bright lights were lit up. The Matron and the nurse, in their crisp uniforms, moved about briskly. All three had put on face masks. But Anjali could see the smiling eyes of Dr. Mathur cheering her up.

Anjali suddenly felt a poke and before she could count ten, everything began to look hazy and then, absolute blackout.

It was as if from very far away Anjali could hear voices murmuring. She was slowly regaining consciousness. Her operation was over! It was all so simple, just a deep sleep—then, why had she been so scared earlier? She gave a feeble smile to the nurse who then called Dr. Mathur.

"It was a neat and beautiful operation," he told her reassuringly. "Now no more shooting tummy-pains. You are free to run around and play any game. But on one condition—another 20 days in bed!" And turning to the Matron, he asked her, "Matron, shall we let the young lady go home after 4 days?"

"Yes, why not, Doctor?" the Matron replied. "She is well-behaved, and will follow our instructions like a good patient."

"Now, let's send her back to her room," Dr. Mathur said. "Her parents must be waiting for her."

Soon, Anjali was with Mummy and Daddy and Mayan. "Here comes our brave little soldier," Daddy said. Mummy bent and gave her a kiss and Mayan squeezed her hand. She was comfortably settled in her bed and everyone was asked to let her rest for the day and not disturb her.

By evening Anjali felt quite rested. The wound did not pain her as yet. She was told that she might have a mild pain for a couple of days till the cut healed. But now she had no more fear.

There were a stream of visitors to see her. Many of her friends came; from her school, Roopa came; she told her about all the excitement her operation had created in the class. She even told Anjali that she would copy all the notes for her, and she was not to worry.

Anjali felt great. On top of the world, really. After all, it seemed she was going to have a special holiday!

A.S.

MONA THE MENACE

"Eeeeeeeeeee" came a cry from the kitchen. Mrs. Kohli ran from the bedroom, her work half-done. She saw that her one-year-old daughter, Mona, was sitting and weeping on a still warm griddle, left on the floor. Mrs. Kohli picked her up, scolded her nicely, and applied medicine on her popo.

The cry brought their neighbour into the house. She picked up the baby from the sofa and took her out for a little air.

In the evening, when Mr. Kohli came home, his wife complained, "You know, this house is too small for us. Why don't you send an application for a bigger house?"

He replied, "I have already applied, but . . . where is Mona?"

She was not to be found in the bedroom or in the kitchen. He saw that she was happily standing in a bucket full of water. "What in the world are you doing, Mona?" He brought her out, spanked her well, and put her to bed.

Next morning, after bath, Mrs. Kohli saw that Mona was sitting in between the unwashed dishes, with rice and 'dal' all over her face. She couldn't help laughing at such a funny sight. She had to take her for a second bath.

That evening the Kohlis made a programme for shopping. Mrs. Kohli looked for Mona, but she was nowhere to be found. She thought she would dress up first and then attend to Mona. When she entered the room, she heard a frightened voice calling, "Maanmaa". She was startled. She saw Mona amongst her dry-cleaned saris. She had hidden herself under them.

So the programme was cancelled and they had to stay home that day.

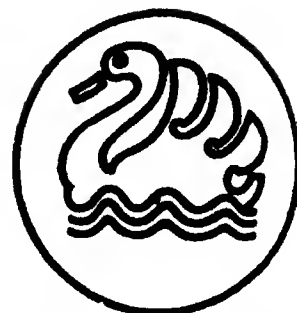
I hope Mona stays a 'menace', to give us pleasure!

Ajay Girimaji (13)
India

IT'S A DUCK....IT'S A GOOSE....NO, IT'S A SWAN!



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CATCH

DHIRA was a shoeshine. He had lost his father when he was a little boy and he now lived in a 'jhuggi' with his mother and sister. Dhira was a very hard working boy. After school, he used to sit near the cinema with his shoeshine box and earned a good amount of pocket money.

One day it was very warm, and Dhira dragged his kit under the shade of a nearby tree. While he was counting his earnings and humming a popular tune, he overheard a passerby, "A thief just escaped from the jewellery shop."

Dhira left counting, quickly kept his money back in his pocket, and asked him, "When? Where?"

"Just now. He stole a gold necklace and managed to run away. They say he has a beard," said the passerby, before he hurried on his way.



Dhira was about to go to the side of the jewellery shop to find out more details, when a customer accosted him.

"Boy, polish my shoes nicely. There is no hurry," he said, as he looked at his wristwatch.

The man was wearing a blue suit and a red tie. He looked like a rich person. Dhira sat down immediately to polish his shoes, though his mind was still on the jewel theft. He thought that he would, as soon as he finished with his customer, himself go to the shop, as he was curious to know more details.

The man first put his left shoe on the stand. With his yellow cloth, Dhira dusted the shoe quickly. Then, he opened his polish tin, took out some polish, and spread it on the shoe with his brush. He worked fast. He rubbed the polish well and then started shining the shoe.

With a side glance, Dhira saw two policemen approaching. He was eager to ask them about the theft, but the customer seemed to have lost his temper. "You, silly boy! You're not doing your job properly. Polish my shoes well till they shine. There are still five more minutes for the show to be over," he said, as he fleetingly glanced at the policemen.

Dhira was badly shaken. 'He must be an influential man. He may even complain about me to the policemen,' thought Dhira. He did not anymore look here and there, and tried to polish the shoe.

As soon as he had done with the left shoe, Dhira said, "The other shoe, sir."

The man put out his other leg on the stand.

"Hurry up, boy, there are only two more minutes for the show."

'What's this!' thought Dhira, 'a moment ago he was in no hurry, and now he is in a great hurry.'

Dhira dusted the shoe quickly and applied some polish on the shoe. As he was about to shine the shoe with a cloth, he found something glittering poking out at the back of the shoe.

'What could it be?' Dhira wondered. He bent down his head to take a closer look. 'My goodness!' he said to himself.

"Leave it, boy. It's time," the man said,

as he removed his foot from the stand.

Dhira continued to shine the shoes with the cloth, while the man was busy fumbling with his wallet for some change.

Dhira quickly tied two ends of the laces of both the shoes together and got up without taking the coin the man had in his hand. He just rushed towards the policemen. He could hear the man yell at his back, "You, rogue, I'll get you!" But what's this? The man had fallen down on his face when he tried to walk. While he was struggling to get up, Dhira was back with the two policemen. They caught hold of the man's hands.

Yes, he was the jewel thief!

The gold necklace was found inside his shoe and his 'beard' was found in his pocket. He was soon taken to the police station.

Of course, Dhira was praised for his presence of mind. He was also rewarded by the police and by the jeweller. His school too, honoured him with a medal, for his bravery.

Manorama Jais

LIMERICKS

There was a cow on the moon
Who heard a loud boom
A rocket had landed
The astronauts got stranded
Because the cow took up all their room.



I met a big blue whale
She was as strong as a gale
She smiled at me
In joyful glee
To her I was as small as a nail.

*Jyoti Lal (14)
India*

CHETAK: He Saved His Master's Life

THE silence in the army camp was suddenly broken by the neighing of a horse. Rana Pratap, as if remembering an appointment, stood up and rushed outside. A horse trader had come to show him a unique steed. The royal stable-keeper was also present. The horse was an unusual blue. It was, indeed, fit for a king.

With Pratap, it was a case of love at first sight. He, however, asked his officers to try out the horse one by one. Chetak would not let anyone go near him. But, when the Rana's turn came, the horse willingly submitted. He fondled him, took the reins in his hands, and off they went! Thus started a reign of life-long friendship between the horse and the man. Few horses have served their masters in world history as Chetak served Pratap. It is said that he would not eat his food till his master had eaten in his presence.

Glorified in Rajasthani songs and legends, Chetak is a household word. A favourite subject of Rajasthani painters, he is also the immortal hero of a battle which ranks next to Thermopylae—the Battle of Haldighat, fought between the armies of Akbar and Rana Pratap, on June 21, 1576. It is here that Chetak showed signs of valour hitherto unknown to man. It is here that the Rana, like Leonides at Thermopylae, stood lance in hand and thwarted Akbar's ambition to subdue Mewar. When Akbar died 29 years later, Mewar was still free.

The battle began two hours after sunrise and was over an hour after sunset. The place is called Haldighat, because its rocks yield bright yellow sand, almost like 'haldi' (turmeric powder). It was one of the fiercest battle in Indian history, fought on the hottest day of the year. It is said there was neither water nor any shrub around. When organised attack failed, it was horse to horse and then hand to hand battle. Akbar's forces were larger in number and superior

in arms. But what did Chetak do to earn a name forever?

Akbar's army was led by Raja Maan Singh, who was seated on an elephant. Mukhtar Khan, a Mughal reservist, started beating the drum to announce the arrival of the Emperor. This put fresh vigour into the Mughal horses. Rana Pratap dashed on his charger towards Maan Singh's elephant. Chetak sprang upon the elephant in wild fury with its forelegs, while Pratap aimed a mace at Maan Singh, which missed him as he ducked in time. The Rana thus became the target of the entire Mughal concentration.

Chetak succeeded in breaking the trunk of Maan Singh's elephant, but in the process he became lame. The Rana was also severely wounded in the sword-fight, but Chetak galloped away from the battlefield with his master on his back. The Rana's departure from the battlefield disheartened the Rajputs, and the Mughals won a victory which was worse than a defeat. Maan Singh had a narrow escape, but his 'howdah' and the 'mahout' fell dead.

Meanwhile, as Chetak was galloping away on his three legs, two Mughals, who were in hiding, saw him and started pursuing him. Chetak was tired and Pratap himself was exhausted. It was only their tireless spirit which kept them going. A running stream came in the way. Chetak crossed it in one leap. At this juncture, Pratap's brother, Sakat Singh, who was in Mughal service, came on the scene and recognised his brother. Chetak was, thus, being pursued by three riders. The air was rent with the cry: "Nila ghora sa svara" ("Rider of the Blue Horse: Have you seen him?"). Pratap looked back and found that his exiled brother was close behind him. Pratap leapt down from Chetak. Sakat Singh also leapt down, and they both waited for the two Mughals. When they came, the brothers sprang upon them and killed

them. Blood had proved thicker than water!

In the meantime, Chetak, who had been waiting to carry his master to safety, fell down dead at his feet. The brothers wept for him in grief. For Chetak had saved his master's life by sacrificing his own.

In the words of S.R. Sharma, author of an excellent monograph on Rana Pratap:

"Chetak's death made the spot sacred and a monument was raised to his memory and the place till today is known as 'Khurasani-Multani'—named after Khurasan and Multan to which the two Mughals were said to have belonged." The 'Rakt-i-Talai' (Tank of blood), where thousands of Rajputs are said to have shed their blood for the liberation of their motherland, stands



close to Chetak's cenotaph. The place is just 45 kilometres from Udaipur and only 15 kilometres from the famous shrine of Nathji at Nathwara. According to one Rajput legend, before his death, Chetak had brought his master to this temple for prayers.

Rana Pratap died on January 19, 1597, that is, nearly 21 years after Chetak's

death. But he could never forget his steed. He remembered him till his last day. It is said that even Akbar visited Haldighat in disguise and saw the place where Chetak had died. Indeed, it is a historical fact that the Mughal emperor adjourned his court on hearing of Rana Pratap's death.

*Pranav Khullar (15)
India*

A LEAF FROM HISTORY

The Valiant Queen of Gondwana

THE Rajputs were a heroic people. And no less heroic were their womenfolk, who exhibited rare courage and strength in their fight against their enemies. In the face of defeat, they committed "Jauhar" by burning themselves to death, rather than surrender. A shining example of such fine courage and heroism can be found in Rani Durgavathi, who defied the mighty Mughal emperor, Akbar.

Rani Durgavathi belonged to the Chandel dynasty of the Rajputs. Daughter of the Chandel king of Mahoba, she married Dalapet, the king of Gondwana, then known as Gadhakantaka.

Rani Durgavathi had ruled the kingdom as the regent of her minor son, Bir Narayanan. A powerful ruler with 20,000 cavalry and about 1,000 war elephants and considerable treasure, she ruled the country successfully for 16 years.

Learning about her wealth and power, Akbar tried through Asaf Khan, the Governor of Kara, to make her accept his supremacy. But Rani Durgavathi refused to do so. So, he challenged her to a war; Durgavathi accepted the challenge.

Akbar's army consisting of 10,000 horses and a large array of infantry, headed by Asaf Khan, invaded the kingdom. The neighbouring chiefs, out of fear for the great Mughal had joined forces with Asaf Khan. So, the Rani could collect only 5,000 men.

Finding that a major part of her army had deserted her, the Rani took command herself, and valiantly resisted the attack for two days. By the third day, her army had dwindled to a force of just 2,000. Her minis-

ter, Adhar, advised her to flee from the field. The fearless queen replied, "Death in such an uneven contest is more glorious than ignominious flight."

She marched her small army to the forest of Godha and stationed near a narrow ravine. In the battle that ensued, she showed such heroism that she herself slew 300 men on Asaf's side. But he brought in more forces and tried to envelop the pass. Undaunted by this, the Rani riding on her elephant marched against the mighty forces. Her young son, Bir Narayanan, was fighting by her side. They were able to repulse the Mughals twice. But in the third fight, the young prince was wounded and had to be removed to the city. With only 300 men, Durgavathi, with exemplary courage, was still fighting, when two successive arrows hit her on her right temple and in the neck. She extracted them by her own hands and then swooned. When she regained consciousness, she found the Mughal army victorious. In keeping with her character, pride of ancestry, and the heroic principle of never submitting, she snatched a dagger from the girdle of her elephant rider and stabbed herself to death. She died a free queen.

Bir Narayanan, the worthy son of a worthy mother, though wounded, fought as bravely as his mother and sacrificed his life in the defence of his kingdom. The fort fell into the hands of Akbar. When Asaf Khan entered the city, he saw the awesome sight of 'Jauhar'—all the women burnt to ashes!

*Vijayalakshmi Vaidya Raman (12)
India*

Gopal and the Lobster-curry

THERE once lived an old woman, who was very rich. Yet, she was such a miser, that not even the poorest man could expect a single coin from her. She never gave anything towards charity. Not even her nearest and dearest ones had been able to make her give them anything more than an occasional meal! So, it became the talk of the town that the world might come to an end, but old "miserly aunt" (as everyone called her) would never, never part with a coin.

People laughed and joked about it amongst themselves. "It would really be an achievement if we could make her spend some money," they said to one another, "but I bet no one can!"

While a group of people were talking and laughing about it, they saw Gopal, the king's chief jester, passing by. Gopal was a real merry old soul and so sharp that no one could get the better of him. The people liked him for his kind and generous ways and admired his intelligence. They called out greetings to Gopal and he greeted them back. "Well, friends," he said, "what are you laughing about? May I not share the joke?"

"It's about old 'miserly aunt'. We were merely agreeing that no one can possibly get any money out of her."

"You're all wrong," said Gopal at once. "An intelligent man can get anything he wants."

"Do you mean to say you can do it?" asked one of them disbelievingly.

"Of course, I can," said Gopal.

"Very well. It's a bet," said the men together. "If you succeed, we shall all stand you a meal separately. If not, you will have to give us one."

"That's fair enough," said Gopal, laughing. "And I can now look forward to dozens of sumptuous meals!"

"We shall see," said the men.

Gopal immediately turned back and went to the old woman's house. She was just setting out for her daily dip in the Ganges. She was quite surprised to find Gopal outside her door, for people seldom came to

visit her because of her mean nature. She was even more surprised when Gopal saluted her, lying prostrate on the floor. Then he got up and began to dance all over the place, crying, "Thank God!"

Old miserly aunt looked at him in astonishment. "What makes you behave in such a peculiar way, Gopal?"

"I had a very bad dream last night," said Gopal, solemnly. "I dreamt that you were dead. Thank God, you are so hale and hearty!"

"Of course, I am!" she said looking thoroughly annoyed.

"Oh, please, aunt, won't you cook for me your wonderful gourd-curry, one day? I felt so heartbroken last night to think that you were dead and that I would never be able to taste that delicious dish again. None but you can cook it so marvellously!"

Miserly aunt was really flattered at this compliment. No one had ever before called her cooking wonderful, nor had anyone expressed such despair at the possibility of not being able to taste it again. Moreover, her garden had plenty of gourds and it would cost her nothing to cook one.

"Very well," she said; "you may come here for lunch tomorrow and I'll make the gourd-curry. But don't you expect other things, for I really cannot afford to buy anything extra."

"Oh, no, aunt!" said Gopal hastily, "it is only your gourd-curry that I long for!"

When Gopal turned up the next day in time for lunch, he had an enormous fried lobster in his bag. Miserly aunt brought him a plate of coarse rice and a bowl of gourd-curry. As soon as she turned her back for a moment, Gopal put the lobster in the curry.

Then he began to eat with great relish. "Ah!" he said, licking his lips, "how wonderful this lobster-curry tastes, and how sweet of you to give me such a pleasant surprise, when I was only expecting gourds! Really, aunt, I never knew you cooked fish so well!"

"You wicked brat!" cried the old woman in horror. "How dare you speak of lobsters! Don't you know that I am a widow and that

it is a sin for me even to touch a fish, let alone cook it?"

"But, aunt, this is indeed lobster-curry," said Gopal looking puzzled. "Can't you see it for yourself?" and he lifted the enormous lobster from the curry and waved it in front of her eyes. It was still dripping with gravy!

"I have never set my eyes on it before!" cried miserly aunt in astonishment. "I do not know how it got there! Oh, what shall I do?"

"Do?" asked Gopal, pretending to be surprised. "You are going to be famous! When people hear from me what delicious lobster-curry you cook, I am sure they will all pester you for some!"

"Don't you dare speak of it to a soul!" cried miserly aunt in cold horror.

"But, aunt, how can I possibly tell a lie?" said Gopal. "Everybody knows that I have come here for lunch, and they are bound to ask me what I had!"

"Please don't," she pleaded. "I shall be made an outcaste if the people come to know that I cook fish!"

"Well, I cannot tell a lie," he said firmly.

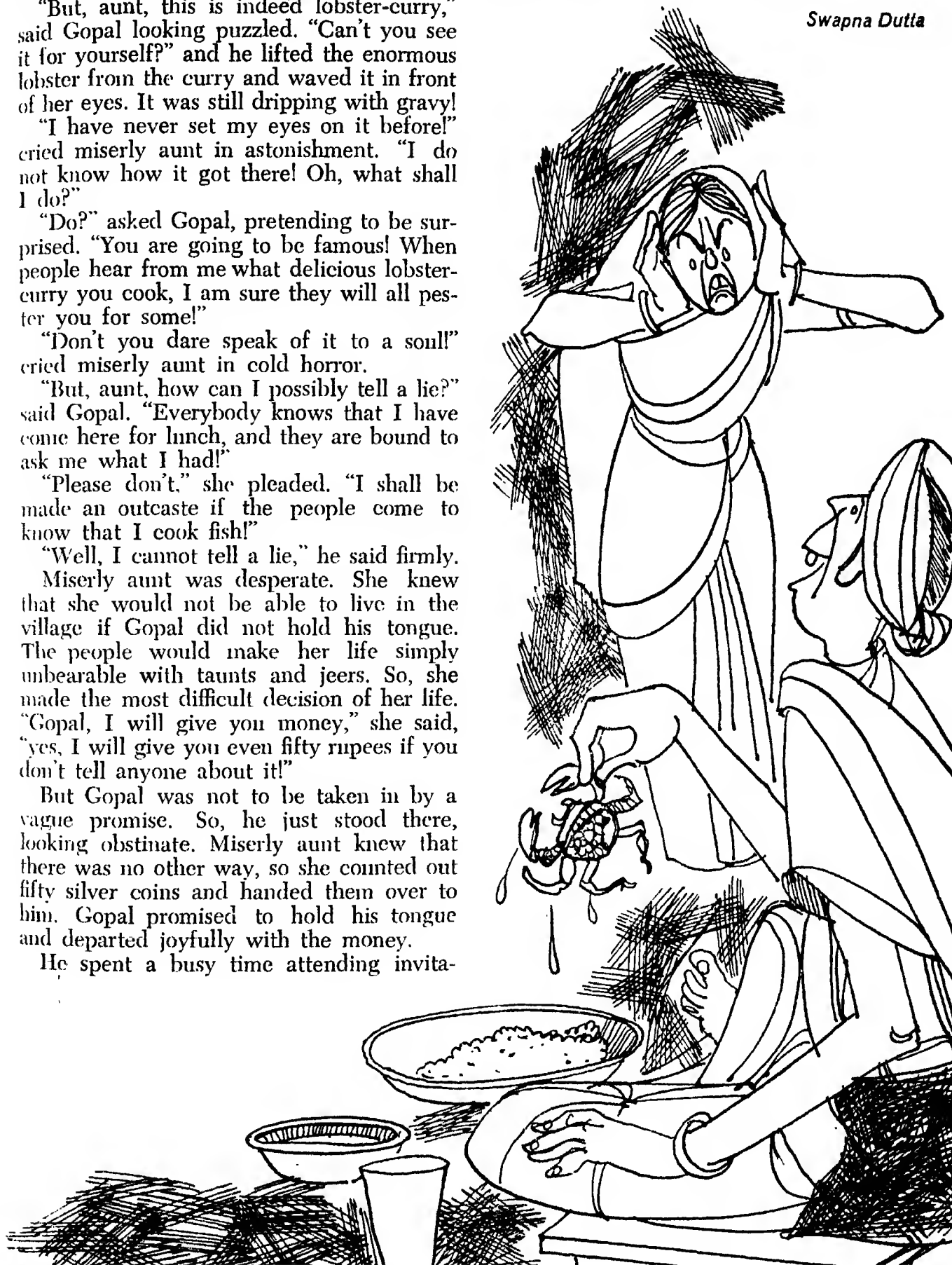
Miserly aunt was desperate. She knew that she would not be able to live in the village if Gopal did not hold his tongue. The people would make her life simply unbearable with taunts and jeers. So, she made the most difficult decision of her life. "Gopal, I will give you money," she said, "yes, I will give you even fifty rupees if you don't tell anyone about it!"

But Gopal was not to be taken in by a vague promise. So, he just stood there, looking obstinate. Miserly aunt knew that there was no other way, so she counted out fifty silver coins and handed them over to him. Gopal promised to hold his tongue and departed joyfully with the money.

He spent a busy time attending invita-

tions for the next few days. Everyone wondered how he had managed it!

Swapna Dutta





THE BAMBOO PRINCESS

LONG, long ago, an elderly couple lived all by themselves at the edge of a bamboo grove. They had a lovely little wooden house by the side of a smooth flowing river. On all sides were steep hills with thick fir trees crowding them. Therefore, their means of livelihood were the bamboo stalks.

The husband cut the bamboos, some thick, some thin, some ripe, and some raw, and his wife made flutes out of them. She even made beautiful baskets and vases out of the bamboos. And on full moon day, both the husband and wife would take all the wares to the nearest town and sell them. It was only on this day that they saw other people. As the years went by, they felt more and more lonely.

"I only wish we had a child," the wife would often tell her husband.

"Yes, my dear wife," the husband would reply "then we would not have been so lonely. All day I am out chopping bamboos, and you are at home making baskets."

One morning in spring, the husband went to the bamboo grove as usual to cut the bamboos. It was a still day. The wind was not blowing and it was easy for him to chop the bamboos. Suddenly, he saw a thick bamboo trunk swaying in front of him. All the other bamboos were still. The man put down his chopper and observed the swaying bamboo closely. In a while it swayed

even more, as though asking to be cut down. So he cut it a little above the ground. And to his utter surprise, he saw even the stump shaking violently. He cut it carefully and looked inside the hollow stick. But he saw nothing. So, he carefully cut it open with his knife.

To his amazement, he saw a little baby girl with a lovely complexion and jet black hair, kicking frantically. The tiny little baby was beautifully dressed in a peach coloured silken kimono and sash.

The woodcutter went down on his knees and thanked Lord Buddha for having granted their wish. Holding her close to his breast, he ran home as fast as he could to show the wonderful gift to his wife. He was worried that she might disappear as miraculously as she had come.

From that day on, the woodcutter and his wife wanted nothing more. Their life revolved round this little godsend gift, and they knew this was not an ordinary mortal. They spent all the money they earned, on buying beautiful material for their little daughter. Since she was not an ordinary child, she grew two feet tall before the moon had waxed. The old woman frequently went to the town to buy new silken material for a new kimono for their girl. They were very happy, looking after and loving their little one. But with all their savings gone, they became very poor.

The woodcutter spent more time chopping bamboos as he was worried about how he would feed his family. One day, as he slashed at a bamboo stem, gold coins started trickling out. He realized that whoever had given them the little girl was also providing for her upbringing. With these gold coins, they bought lots of food and silk for their daughter and they all lived very happily.

Time passed quickly and very soon the little girl became a big girl and from a big girl she became a lady. And when they ran short of money, the woodcutter always found gold trickling out of a bamboo stalk. Their daughter had become a lady in a period of just three years. This was because she was not an ordinary human being. And during these three years, she gave the old couple all the pleasure in the

world. She also learnt all the good things they taught her. She became a gracious and learned lady very soon.

By now news of this wonderful lady had spread in the town. They were surprised that the woodcutter and his wife had kept it a secret all these years. They never knew that she had only been in their care for three years. And when the townsfolk saw her, they compared her to a princess. And though the old couple had her for just three years, they loved her as though she had been with them all their life. And they were sad that so soon the time had come for her to be married.

As word of her beauty spread far and wide, many suitors came from all over the land to woo her. The woodcutter humbly told her, "We have loved you like our own child and since we are old, we cannot look after you forever. You will be married some day. Can I request you to let me choose only those men who are worthy of you?"

The Bamboo Princess hung her head with grief and said that she had no wish to marry since she did not want to leave them and anyway, she was not a mortal as she had reached the age of marriage in barely three years.

But seeing the distress on the face of the old woodcutter and his wife, the Bamboo Princess announced, "I will only receive three suitors. And to each of them, I will set a task. And I will only marry the suitor who will fulfil my task."

So the old couple were happy again. Every month they met various young men who wished to see her. It took them six whole months to find three young men suitable enough for their Princess.

The Bamboo Princess received each young man by turn and to each she set a task. They were stunned by her beauty and gracious manners.

The first suitor was asked to bring for her the bowl which Lord Buddha had used for eating and begging.

The second young man was asked to bring the skin of the tree-rats found across the western sea. This rare skin was known to be fireproof.

The third suitor was asked to bring a seashell, which the swallows are said to keep

secretly in their nests.

Each young man was determined to win the hand of the beautiful princess, and in haste they set off to fulfil the task set for them, since each one of them wanted to be first to complete the task.

The first suitor went to his friend, a potter, and told him that he wanted an earthen bowl which would look old enough like the one the Buddha had used for eating and begging. "Help me, my friend. For, I cannot go to India to search for it, with so little time left. The other two suitors might return before I did. Please, I beg you to make me such a bowl. I will pay you well for your good deed."

Now, this potter was very good at his work. He made an earthen bowl which look-

ed exactly like the bowl Lord Buddha had used. He gave it such a good effect that it looked really old.

The first suitor then hurriedly ran back to the Bamboo Princess, having completed his task. She welcomed him respectfully and examined the bowl. Then she told him with a smile, "I am grateful to you for wooing me. But you have cheated me. Your clever potter friend has done a good job. Take it back to him and pay him well for such a fine imitation job." The young suitor was too abashed for words. He silently left her house, never to return.

The second suitor also had no intentions of crossing the western sea, to search for the tree-rat whose skin would not catch fire. He went to a furrier and told him of his



problem. "Please get me some skin which looks similar to the one I have described," he begged. "And I want it fast. Before the other two suitors return, I should take it to the beautiful princess. I shall pay you well." And, so, the furrier found a rat-skin which was not unlike the one described and he put some ointments and potions on it to make it fireproof.

And, so, the second suitor happily ran back to the Bamboo Princess with the tree-rat skin. The Princess opened the beautifully wrapped packet and gently appraised the rat-skin, much to the happiness of the second suitor. Then she wrapped it up again and told the young man, "I thank you for taking the trouble of going to the furrier and getting this skin for me. Shall we test it by throwing it in the fire?" The young man was ashamed of his deceit, and the old couple were shocked. That was the last they saw of him.

The third young suitor also thought it would take him too long to search all the swallows' nests in Japan to find the sea-shell they are said to keep secretly. So he went to a good fisherman and told him his story. "Please find me such a sea-shell as you roam the shores of Japan," he begged him. "I will always be indebted to you."

The fisherman earnestly looked for a sea-shell as described to him. He eventually found one which, he thought, fitted the description. With this wrapped in thin tissue, the third suitor rushed to the Bamboo Princess and presented the parcel to her with all affection. She keenly looked at the sea-shell and said, "The fisherman has done quite a good job of searching for such a lovely piece. I think you should let him keep it." Saying so, she handed it back to him. The young man groped for words of apology and humbly left for his home.

The old couple apologised profusely for not having found a good suitor for their dear one. They begged her to forgive them and worried about what would be her future.

She smiled at them and said, "One more suitor will come and ask for my hand, which I shall once again refuse. And, then, I shall have to leave you both." They could not understand what she said.

"I am happy here at my earthly home," she reassured them. "But this is not my true home."

So, they waited for the fourth young man to come. They did not look out for one, since they were sad that their happiness would leave them. And, then, the day came when the heir to the throne of Japan, having heard so much about her, himself came to ask for her hand in marriage.

The princess welcomed him graciously and said, "I am honoured by your presence here, Denka. But accept my apologies." And saying so, she gave him a scroll on which were written some dainty inscriptions. She asked him to read it, but not to show it to anyone. He accepted it and went away without another word.

And, then, she turned to her parents and said with grief in her eyes, "The time has come for me to leave. Now I can explain who I am. I was selfish and rude in my own home, not befitting the position I held, that of being the daughter of the Moon. He sent me to earth as a form of punishment, so that I could learn to love and respect everyone. He chose you two, my dear parents, to look after me. It was he who put the gold coins in the bamboo stalks. I will never regret even a moment spent with you. And I am grateful to you for all you have taught me." The old couple's eyes filled with tears of grief on hearing all this.

That night was full moon night. The Bamboo Princess silently bade farewell to the old couple and went and stood outside in the open. A chariot came riding down the moonbeams, and she was escorted to her real home.

Even today, nobody knows what was written in the scroll she had given to the heir to the throne of Japan. It is said that he burnt it as she had instructed him to, and he did so on top of Mount Fiji. Even today, people believe that the pillar of smoke that rises from the top of the mountain, no longer a volcano, is the smoke which comes from the scroll that was burnt.

The old couple lived for the rest of their lives, with the memories of their daughter who was, in fact, the daughter of the Moon and had graced their humble home.

(A Japanese Folk Tale Retold by Alaka Shankar)

Tanny's Secret

A RUN came, whistling along, with his basket to collect the eggs from the hen shed. Tanny, the big brown hen, nestled tartly over her large brown egg. She hated Arun, because he always took away all her eggs. He walked straight up to her; she shrieked and puffed her feathers out, angrily. Cleverly he lifted her by her tail and picked up the egg. Tanny screamed and scolded and ran away grumbling. Arun filled the basket with the other eggs from the shed and took them into the house.

'This won't do,' Tanny told herself as she watched Arun go. The next time, she would sit on her eggs until all of them were hatched, she decided. That meant looking for a hiding place, of course, for Arun was very shrewd and rough in his ways.

Rudy rooster was passing by and, seeing Tanny lost in thought, he went up to her and asked, "Tan, darling, is something wrong?" He made tender throaty sounds to show her that he loved her and that he would do anything to make her happy. Tan told him what she had on her mind. Rudy thought for a while, then brightened up. "Come," he said and led the way. Tan walked obediently behind him. She trusted him. She had known for a long time that he was wise.

Off they went beyond the hen shed, past the dogs' kennels, over the pigs' troughs, to the barn. There, in a dark corner, Rudy showed her a discarded old basin. Together they worked, putting in strands of hay, and the nest was ready. In it Tan laid an egg every day and came away without a sound. At the hen shed, she cackled away to her heart's delight.

Arun and his master were worried about Tan. "Perhaps she has stopped laying," said the master. This was unusual because Tanny was one of their best layers.

In the meantime, the eggs in the basin were increasing. When there were eleven, Tanny decided that they were enough. A bigger brood would be difficult to manage.

Soon everyone on the farm saw less and less of Tan. Arun told his master that he was sure someone had stolen her. Rudy heard that and chuckled slyly. He visited Tan daily and knew that all was well. By and by three weeks of hiding were nearly over. Tan only left the nest for a drink of water and a few scratched up worms, when the master and Arun would be busy within the house. Tan was excited. The eggs were warm and alive. 'Today's the day,' she kept telling herself, 'today any time!'

Rudy came in for a peep. "How's everything?" he asked softly.

"SShhh. Two so far," she told him. After a while, the third had hatched, and then the fourth, and finally all eleven. The chicks were safe and snug.

"Can't you come out now?" Rudy wanted to know.

"Not until tomorrow; they need warming up," she answered.

The next morning, she asked her babies, "Shall we go out for a feed, my dears?"

"Cheep cheep cheep," they chorused.

So, Tan stepped down majestically from the basin and the chickens tumbled out after her, scurrying along. When they reached the hen shed, Arun was coming, whistling along. "Helllloooo," he said when he saw her and let out a long low whistle. "So this was what you had been up to, Madam!" he said.

"Feed us," Tan grumbled.

But Arun ran in to call the master.

"Clever Tan," said the master. They placed her in a clean coop to protect her from eagles, crows, and cats.

"Tell you what," the master told Arun. "There's little Pooja at the cottage down the road; she has just recovered from measles. Let's carry Tan and her brood over to her as a gift. Her father has been one of our best customers, you know."

"You mean Mr. Kapur's daughter, Master?"

"Right you are, Arun."

And wasn't Pooja glad? "Oooohhhhh!" she cried in delight, "this is the nicest gift I've ever had. Now I'm not sorry that Doctor Kochar ordered me to stay indoors."

Tanny crowed, showing her delight in the new surroundings, and Pooja fed her some grain. The chickens crowded round their mother and merrily pecked away.

In the distance Rudy crowed loudly, clearly, and piteously.

Margaret D'Souza



My theme for a dream



I DREAMT a dream last night. It was a very beautiful and very unusual kind of dream. To dream it was so sweet an experience. I felt I just had to share it with someone...

The most unusual thing about my dream was that even while I was dreaming, I *knew* I was dreaming—and I did not want to wake up...

I dreamt I was the Spirit of Peace and Happiness. My eyes were the depths of the ocean, and their sparkles were the clear streamlets who sing in ecstasy as they race down the mountainside. My dress was woven with sunshine and leaves of grass, and my hair was entwined with narcissi. My breath was the gentle spring breeze, and my laughter echoed with the music of birdsong. I was the ultimate ambition of every traveller on the road to contentment through the land of life, and though men called me elusive, I was so simple to catch...oh, but only wise men knew how.....

One day, as I lazily sailed the skies, I came across a man who looked very sad. He sat on a log by the side of a well, with his face in his hands. I could not bear to see unhappiness in a world where I lived, so I descended upon him and whispered in his ear, "O human, why are you unhappy?"

He looked up sadly. "Why am I unhappy? I have lost a great fortune. It fell into the well and now I only have very little left."

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING HOOP



THE STORY SO FAR

Prakash Tandon, his younger sister, Vinita, and their friend, Avi, are on their way to Mr. Mullick's shop, to buy a present for Avi's younger sister, 6-year-old Tinu. It is her birthday. On their way, 'Kash' notices strange men in the Central Park. He wants to 'investigate', but they have no time, so they go straight to Mullick's. A big built man is seen talking to Mr. Mullick. He keeps quiet as soon as they enter. The children ask for a Hulla-Hoop Girl, and Mr. Mullick gets one from the back-store neatly wrapped. In his hurry, he knocks against a crate, making a deep scratch on his shoe. The children take the parcel and rush home. On seeing them, Mrs. Tandon exclaims that she had sent their servant, Govind, in search of them. Together they all go for the party.

When Tinu starts to open her presents, she is happy to find a Hulla-Hoop Girl from the Shuklas. Her cousin, Seema, cries for it, and Avi gives her the duplicate one from Prakash and Vini. Seema takes the unopened box and runs to her room. Tinu plays with the toy till it breaks, and then goes to sleep.

The next morning, it is in the papers that Mr. Mullick's shop had been raided for diamonds, but that nothing had been found. Prakash and Vini are very excited about it. They go to Avi's house to give him the news.

Now read on.....

4. "BIT OF CONFUSION"

MEANWHILE, things were happening in Avi's home as well.

Tinu woke up to remember how she had spoiled her Hulla-Hoop Girl, which had stopped dancing soon after the birthday party broke up late in the evening.

"It won't dance anymore!" she thought, as she got out of her bed and hurried to the table where, she remembered, she had left the toy. Of course, it was still there! But she couldn't believe her eyes. The hoop was no longer broken; the girl's nose was not broken! And when she operated the switch, 'Whr-r-r-r' it went and continued to sway and swirl gracefully.

She flicked the switch back, took the toy in her hand and gave the girl a fond kiss. 'Mummy must have got me a new Hulla-Hoop Girl!' Tinu thought as she ran to the kitchen. "Thank you, Mummy, thank you, thank you very much," she blurted out, snuggling close to her.

Mrs. Tayal looked a little surprised. "What are the thanks for, Tinu?" she asked.

"For the new Hulla-Hoop Girl!"

"New? What is new? You had spoiled your toy, didn't you? I saw it on the table."

"But this is not the same! This is new. Come on, Mummy, you bought this new one for me, didn't you?"

Mrs. Tayal looked at the Hulla-Hoop Girl. "I didn't buy it, I didn't buy any toy! It must be Avi; go and thank him!"

"Avil Avil" shouted Tinu as she stormed into his room.

"What's it now, little gale?" said Avi, looking up. He called her a gale whenever she stormed in like that.

"Thank you, brother, thank you very, very much."

"For what?" demanded Avi.

"For this, of course," she said, showing the toy to him.

"It was broken yesterday, wasn't it?" Avi asked without raising his head.

"But this is the new one you got for me," said Tinu.

"New? I didn't bring any, new or old!" said Avi, looking at the toy. "But this is new, indeed."

"You didn't get it? Mummy said she did not get it. Oh, it must be Daddy, then," said Tinu and started running away.

"Wait, Daddy doesn't even know that your toy was spoiled," Avi reminded her.

"Whoever it is, thank you, very, very much!" Tinu sang the words like a song as she went hopping all over the house.

Avi was curious though. He went to his mother. "Mummy, you know I didn't go out again last night. Could it be Prakash or Vini?"

"I don't think they knew about it. They weren't here when it was spoiled." Mrs. Tayal was curious, too. "Who could it be? Oh," she said suddenly. "Now I know who it was! Nandini! She knew Tinu would be very unhappy about her toy. So she must have left the other one I had given to Seema."

"Then where's the damaged one?" asked Avi.

"I'll talk to Nandini some time today, and ask her."

Avi walked towards his room. Suddenly he changed his mind and turned to go out. He wanted to tell Prakash and Vini about the toy. He hadn't even got out of the gate when he saw them both, hurrying towards his house.

"We've news!" said Vini excitedly. Her voice was almost a whisper.

"I've news, too," said Avi joining them. "Let's go to my room and talk."

He led them upstairs. "Out with your news now," he said, excitedly.

"It'll take a long time to tell," said Prakash. "You tell yours first."

"Oh, mine?" said Avi hesitantly. "It's not much of a news, really." He laughed a bit. "Just a bit of confusion. Tinu's Hulla-Hoop Girl broke yesterday. Not the one you gave. The one from Uncle Shukla. So we had two Hulla-Hoop Girls; yours, Mummy had given to Seema. You remember her?"

"Your Aunt Nandini's daughter? Her elder sister is Alpana, isn't it?" said Prakash. "Go on."

"Mr. Kashlock Holmes can't miss a thing!" Vinita remarked.

"This morning, Tinu found a new Hulla-Hoop Girl on her table, instead of the one that was spoiled. We are wondering how it came to be there," said Avi and narrated all the details.

"Oh, that's nothing! Ours is terrific news," said Vinita, "and bad news at that." All of a sudden she looked sad. "You tell him, Prakash," she prompted him.

Prakash told Avi all that his father had told him.

"That's really bad news," said Avi. "I can't imagine Mr. Mullick doing anything bad like that."

"You never know, Avi," said Prakash, in an adult tone. "These days, bad people also wear wonderful clothes... and put on smiles."

"That's true," said Avi. "Though I don't think Mr. Mullick is that sort."

Just then the telephone rang in the drawing room. Avi ran down and picked up the phone.

"Avi speaking," he said into the mouth-piece.

"Avi," came the voice at the other end. "Inspector Bhalla, here."

"Oh, Uncle Bhalla! Good morning, Uncle. We've not seen you for a long time."

"Thanks a lot, I am fine. I rang up to ask about the Hulla-Hoop Girl Prakash and Vinita had purchased from Mullick's. You

were with them, weren't you?" the voice asked.

"Yes, Uncle. Why?"

"Where's that toy now?"

"It's with us. Tinu has it. Why?"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, sure; Mummy had given it to Aunt Nandini's daughter, because we got another one from the Shuklas, which Mummy gave to Tinu. But Tinu damaged hers and this morning we found Aunty had taken away the spoilt one and left the good one."

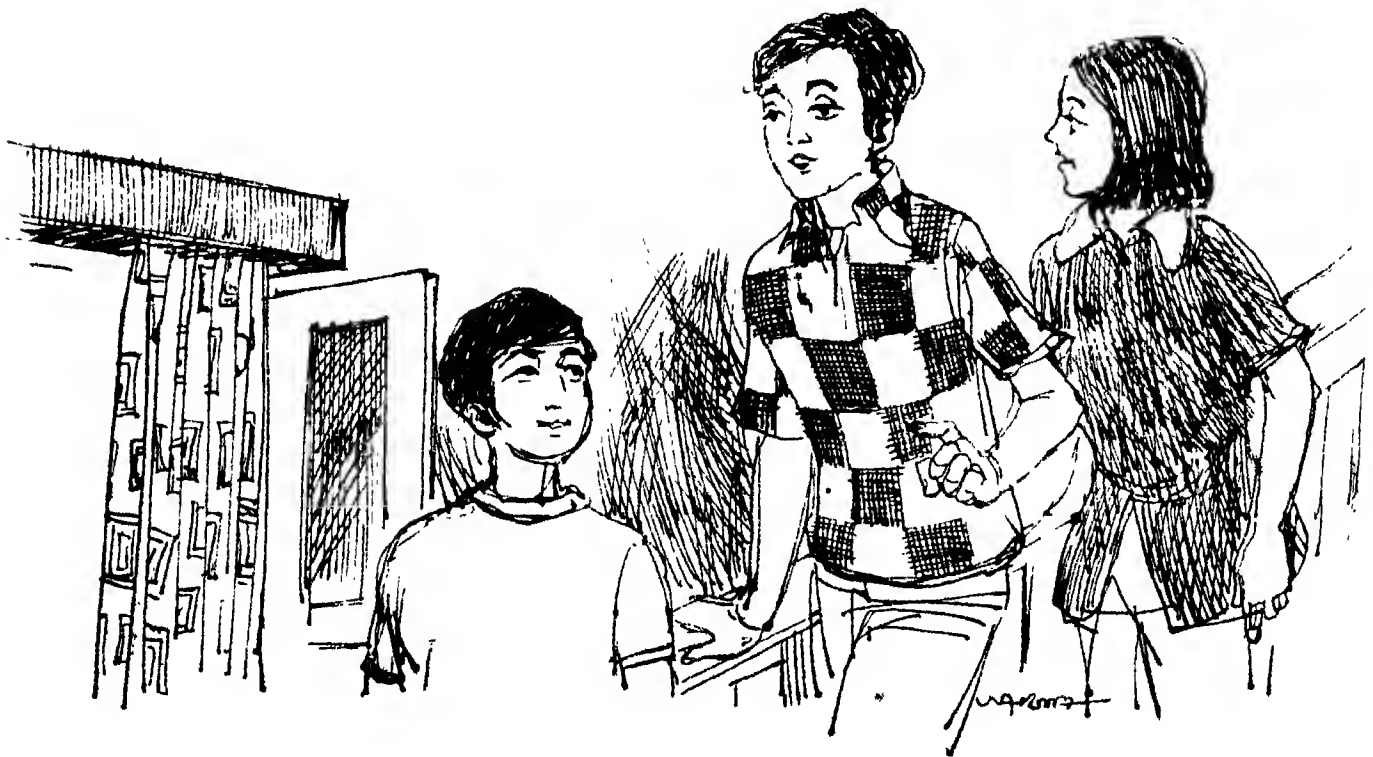
"Don't be silly," the voice said, and suddenly the phone went dead.

Avi frowned at the phone. Uncle Bhalla had never called him 'silly'. In fact, he had often remarked that he was a bright boy.

Avi was a little sore about it. With a sullen face, he went back to his room where Prakash and Vinita sat waiting for him.

Sudha Goel

(To be continued)

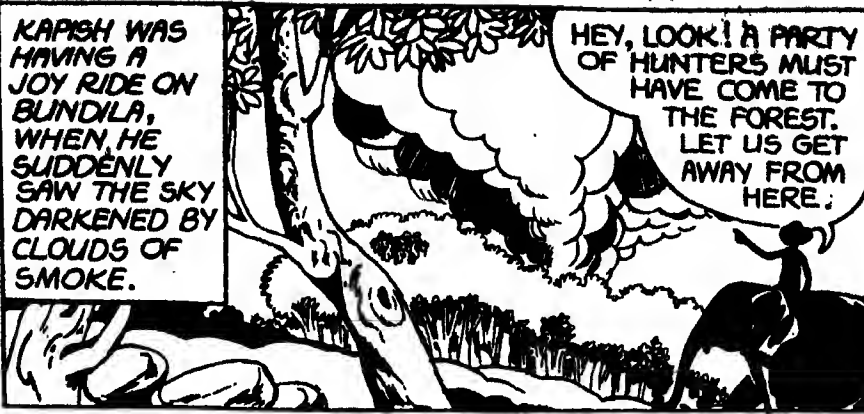


KAPISH



ANANT PAI
MOHANDAS

KAPISH WAS
HAVING A
JOY RIDE ON
BUNDILA,
WHEN HE
SUDDENLY
SAW THE SKY
DARKENED BY
CLOUDS OF
SMOKE.

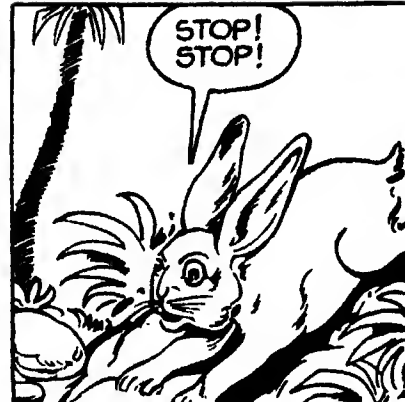


HEY, LOOK! A PARTY
OF HUNTERS MUST
HAVE COME TO
THE FOREST.
LET US GET
AWAY FROM
HERE.

JUST THEN—



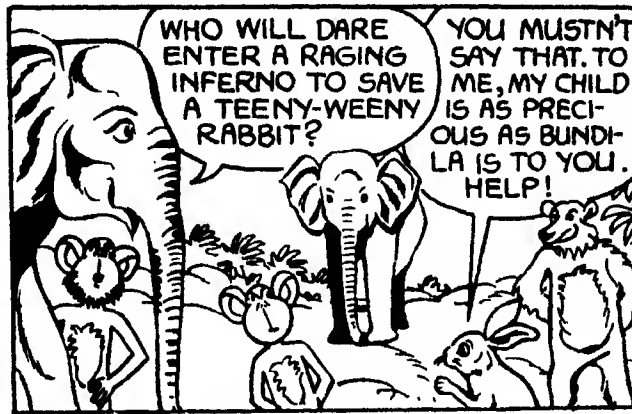
RUN!
THE
JUNGLE IS
ON FIRE!



STOP!
STOP!

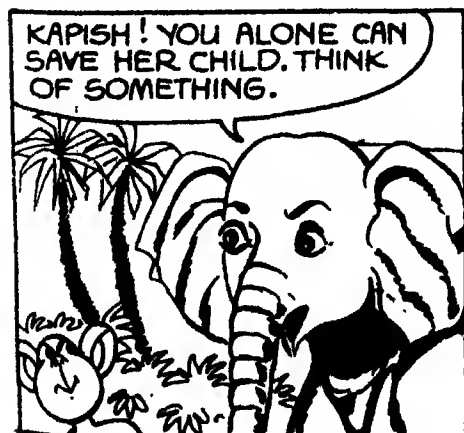


HELP! HELP! I JUST
CAN'T FIND MY
SON. PERHAPS
HE IS CAUGHT
IN THE FIRE.



WHO WILL DARE
ENTER A RAGING
INFERNO TO SAVE
A TEENY-WEENY
RABBIT?

YOU MUSTN'T
SAY THAT TO
ME, MY CHILD
IS AS PRECI-
OUS AS BUNDI-
LA IS TO YOU.
HELP!



KAPISH! YOU ALONE CAN
SAVE HER CHILD. THINK
OF SOMETHING.

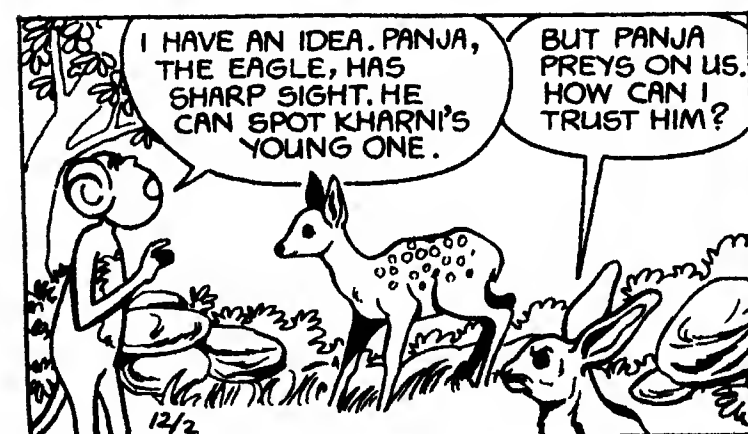
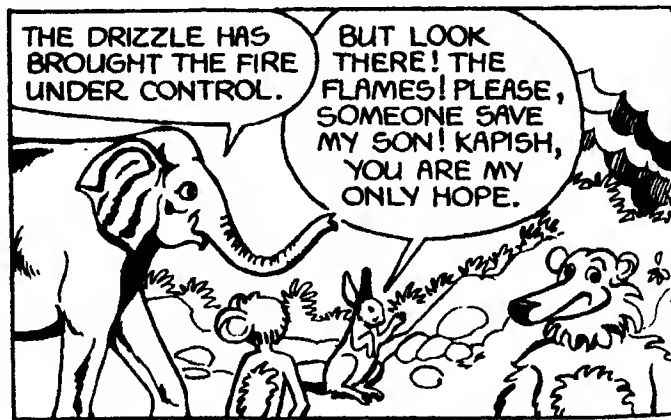
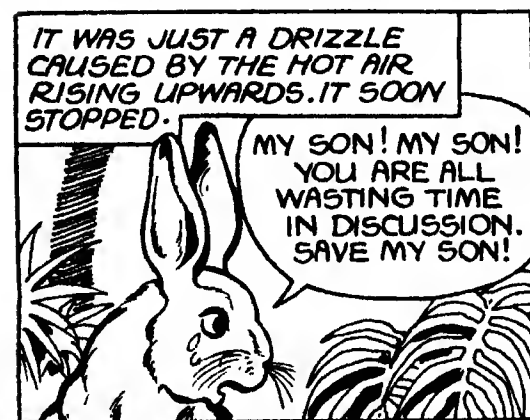
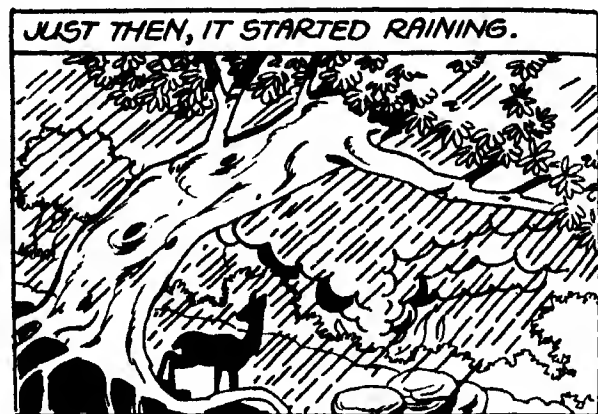
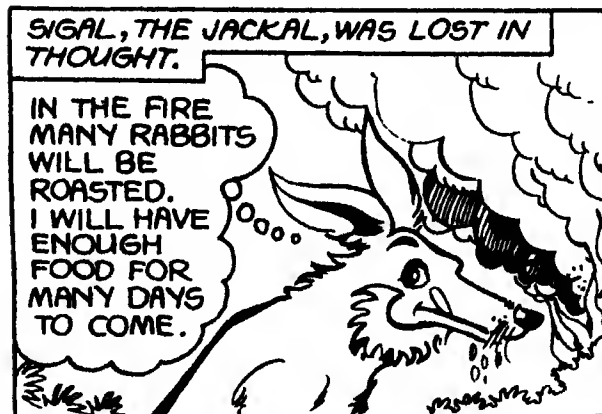
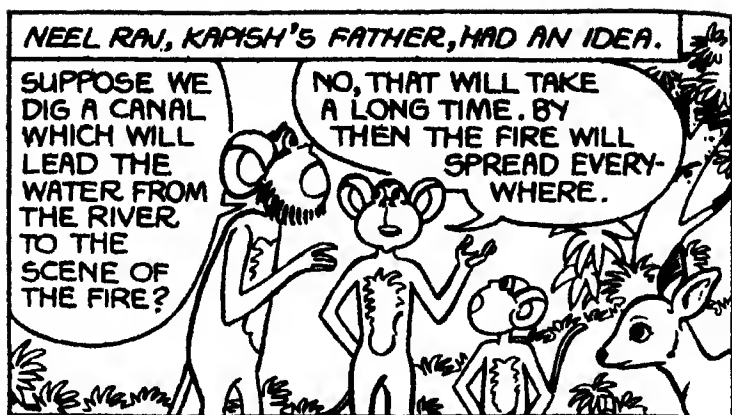


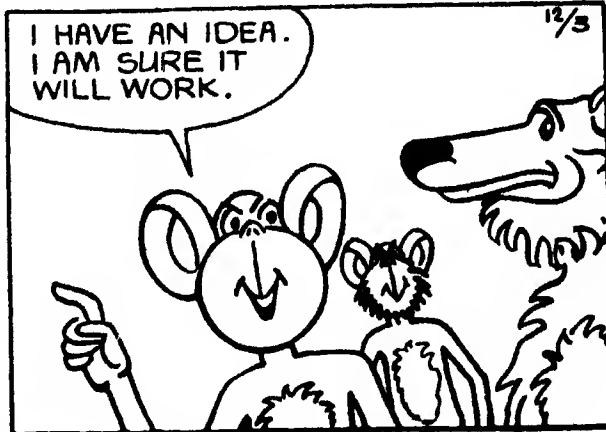
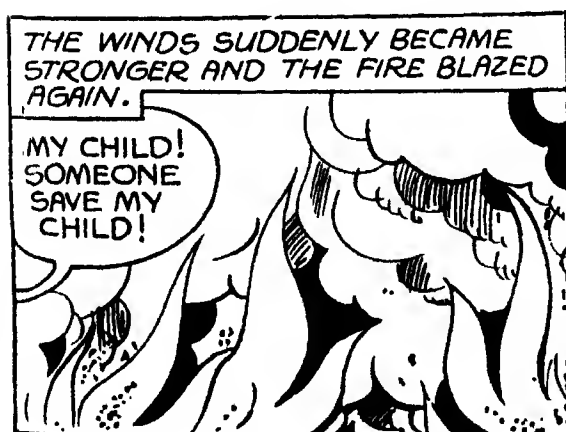
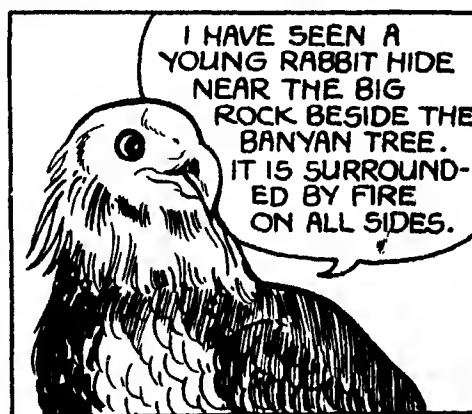
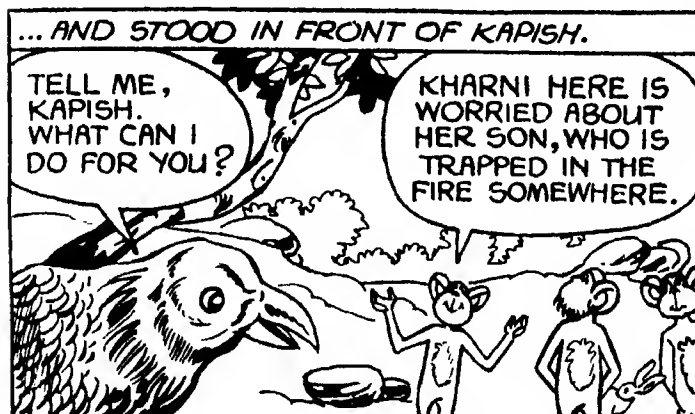
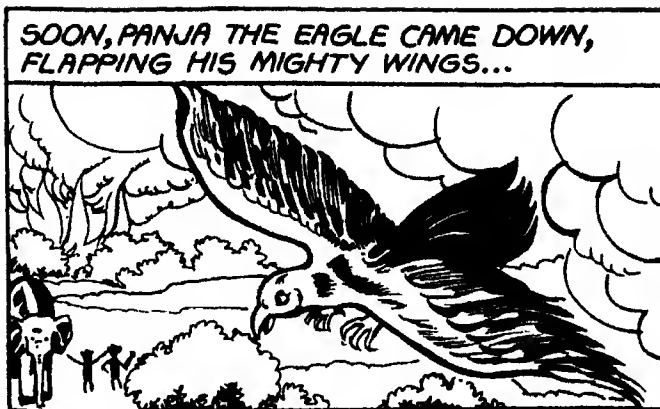
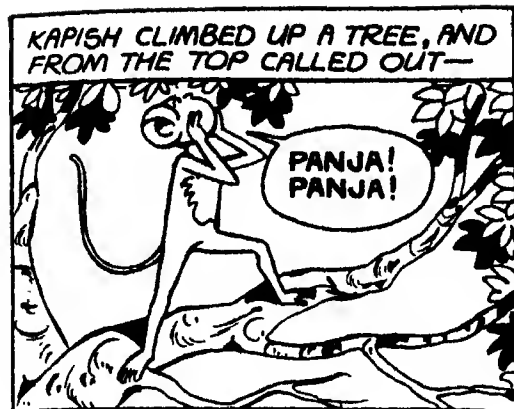
SUPPOSE ALL
THE ELEPHANTS
SUCK WATER
FROM THE
RIVER AND SPRAY
IT FROM THEIR
TRUNKS ON THE
FLAMES...

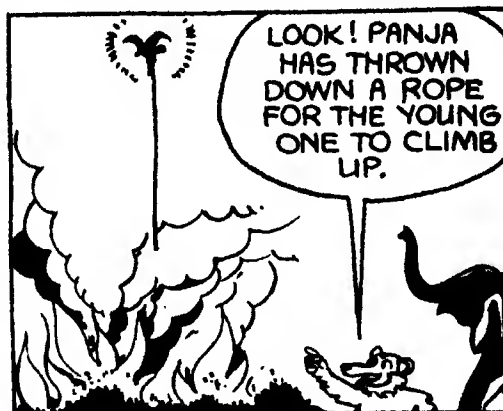
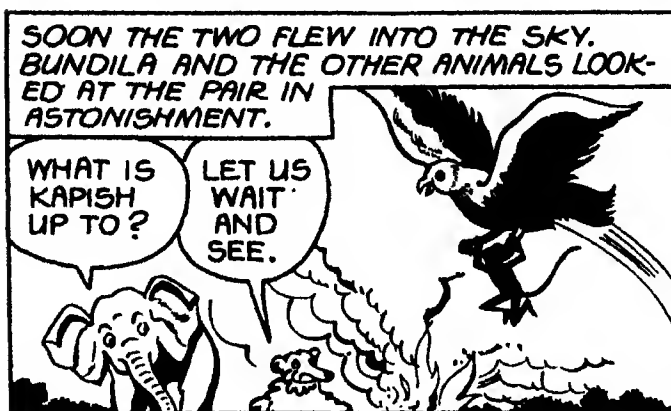
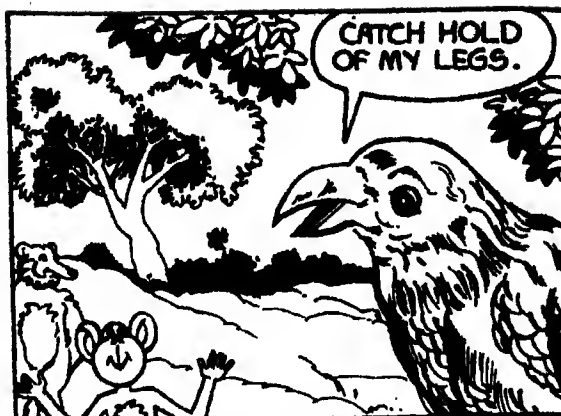
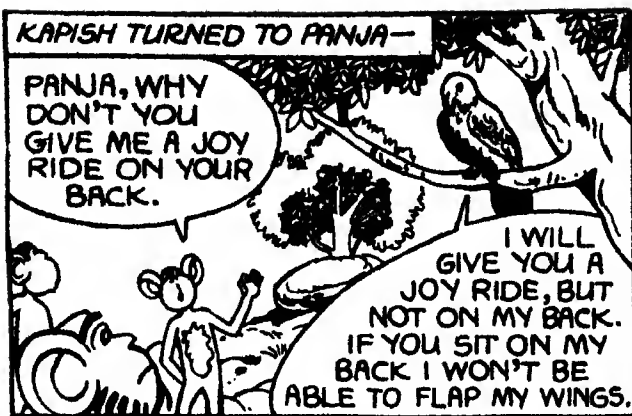


...IT MIGHT
HELP
EXTINGUISH
THE FIRE.

NO. IT IS A
FOREST-FIRE,
A CONFLAG-
RATION.







CAN ANIMALS THINK?



Your move....!

STUDIES in the past few decades have confirmed that the animal organism inherits a precise life-programme, dictating a specific behaviour pattern. But higher animals have to learn a great deal through trial and error, in order to be able to adapt themselves to the conditions of their life.

Under the guidance of Prof. Leonid Krushinsky, researchers of the Biology Faculty at the Moscow State University conducted a series of experiments to ascertain the ability of animals—to what extent they are capable of inferring the unknown from the known, and to what extent they can use their brain.

The experiments revealed that dolphins, monkeys, redfoxes, and dogs were the most quickwitted. However, the animals find it hard to “use their brain”. Dogs get “tired” of thinking and become indifferent or aggressive. Crows get scared, and sometimes even fall ill as a result of excessive “mental” effort!

The point is that in natural conditions, animals do not constantly have to solve difficult problems, involving thinking, and too much of mental strain would make them turn neurotic.

Animals develop adaptability to living conditions with the help of conditioned reflexes, but these reflexes are fraught with fatal errors. Fish which spawn millions of eggs can afford the luxury of erring, while other species developed an “unerring” brain.

The mental abilities, the power of reasoning in animals, serve just as a means of adaptation to surrounding conditions, and are not of a creative nature as in the case of man.

Lyubov Ivanova

GO-ANYWHERE VEHICLE

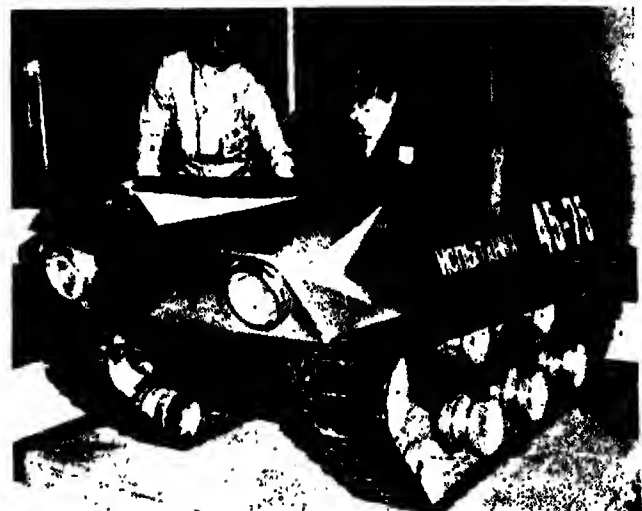
Nearly 50 kilometres an hour is the speed of this two-seater go-anywhere vehicle, designed and built by members of a young technicians' club, in Novosibirsk, in the U.S.S.R.

Fitted with a modernised motorcycle engine, the vehicle easily ploughs its way through deep snow. The young technicians have provided it with rubber and metal tracks of their own design, so that ground pressure is very small—only 70 grammes per square centimetre.

According to the designers, the vehicle is an excellent help to foresters who have to cover dozens of kilometres daily inspecting their stands. Also, it is a convenient vehicle for all those who, by nature of their work, have to move under no-road conditions.

The go-anywhere vehicle was recently on display at an exhibition of about 10,000 scientific and technical inventions by youth from Bulgaria, Hungary, Cuba, Poland, Rumania, Mongolia, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union.

(Courtesy: USSR Information Dept.)



Aerial Acrobats

THESE acrobats need no training; their art comes to them, instinctively. They roll, twist, zigzag, and often rocket up into the sky, only to swoop down again, screaming loudly, just to attract attention! They are Rollers; solidly built, jay-like birds, with stout, hooked bills, relatively large heads, and the third and fourth toes united. The male and female usually look almost alike.

Their home is in Africa, but some species are found in the Indo-Malayan and Australian region. And the more 'flighty' ones reach as far north as Finland and Iceland. They are related to the hoopoes, kingfishers, and motmots, but are far more quarrelsome! During the courtship season, two males sometimes become locked in aerial combat and fall to the ground. They have also been known to have attacked boys and men climbing to their nests. When cornered, they have even attacked dogs!

Their acrobatics is at its height in the breeding season, when they seek attention most. Though not all species are equally active, all of them fly swiftly and strongly—so that usually when one flies past, all that can be seen of it is a flash of brilliant blue.

In hunting food, rollers sit fairly upright, the head hunched slightly, and the tail jerking slowly up and down. They usually capture grasshoppers, winged ants, moths, and butterflies. More rarely they catch small birds in midair, carry them back to a perch—limbs of trees or exposed wires—stun them, and then swallow them, head first. Sometimes, in the vicinity of grass fires, they join flocks of hawks and other birds, and quickly finish off insects flushed by the smoke. Certain species hunt from exposed perches. They pounce on locusts, crickets, beetles, small lizards, frogs, and



mice on the ground.

Rollers rarely build their own nests. They generally nest in cavities and crevices in trees, ant hills, and mud walls, and even take over the nests of other birds, their favourite victims being woodpeckers and starlings. Sometimes, they enlarge the holes and add a little bit of grass, straw, rootlets, and feathers. Usually, however, they lay the eggs on the bare floor of the cavity.

They lay two to five white, fairly glossy eggs at a time. And both the male and the female take turns in incubating. Both, too, rear the young. Incubation lasts 17 to 19 days, and the young do not fly for another 27 days or so. They are hatched blind and

without feathers, but soon develop them in tightly sheathed waxy capsules!

The call of the roller is harsh and rasping and is usually heard as "racker-racker-racker".

Some of the more common rollers are the *European Roller*, which is 12 inches long, has an azure body plumage, a chestnut back, and rich blue wings; the *Lilac-chested Roller*, which is 15 inches long, with a deeply forked blue tail, a chestnut brown back, and the throat, face, chest and upper abdomen a bright black; and the *Broad-mouthed Dollarbird*, which is so named because of a silvery speculum, the size of a dollar, in its wings.

Viswajita Das

HOW and WHY

Sukhbir Singh Bhatia, New Delhi, asks:

Why do radios (connected to mains) take more time to start working than transistors?

A simple answer is that a radio takes time to 'warm up', while a transistor needs no warming up! But, then, what is it in a radio that needs warming up? A radio has several valves (vacuum tubes) which you might have seen. They are glass tubes, silvered inside and on top, with bakelite bottoms, and are fixed to the base of the radio by metallic pins. These take a small amount of time to start working. When a radio is switched on, current from the mains begins to heat up the wire of the tubes. Switch on the radio and look at the tubes through the back of your radio, you will see the tube (actually the wire in the tube, called 'cathode') begin to glow a reddish yellow. This heat energy is given to electrons of the wire material which, then, begin to jump out of the wire and move towards the positive 'anode' that is attracting them. And, then, we say that the current begins to flow. The radio has now started working. All this understandably takes time.

There are no tubes in the transistor radio. The process of supplying electrons is very different and does not require any heating. Transistors are made of special substances called semi-conductors, which emit electrons almost instantaneously when a voltage is

applied to them.

Nakul Mehta, Bombay, writes:

In school, we learn about weather. But could you tell us about 'jet stream'?

Jet Stream is the name given to a relatively narrow and fast moving wind current, lying in the zone of maximum temperature contrast between cold air masses to the north and warm air masses to the south. The direction of the jet stream is predominantly westerly, and wind speeds in the core can be as high as 370 km/hour. The stream is typically at a height of about 13 km from the ground. A jet stream is not particularly small; speeds as high as half of the core speed can be found about 250 km to the north and south of the core; and about 7 km above and below the core. A single stream can be several hundred miles long. Clearly, it can be an unpleasant and dangerous thing for an aircraft to hit and move in a jet stream. This danger is fairly real for fast, high altitude aircraft, like modern jet planes. These jet streams can be monitored by constant study of air conditions, but jet stream forecasting and mapping is not easy, because the streams occur in clear air and are unaccompanied by turbulent clouds, etc. The study of these is a growing part of meteorology.

Meera Ramakrishnan

EVERYMAN IS NOT

A HUMAN BEING !

CAUTION: BEARERS ARE NOT FOR OUTDOOR ERRANDS, ANY MISHAP CAUSED AS A RESULT WILL NOT BE THE MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY. BY ORDER, MANAGER.

WHEN this newly put up board stared me in the face, I chuckled. My friend, Jatin, sitting opposite me, turned his head to see what had amused me; and, understandably, he looked nervous. He then turned his glance towards me with a forced smile. To end his embarrassment, I stopped chuckling with great effort and tried to sober down.



There was, indeed, a glint of humiliation in my friend's eyes. I could read it and was deriving pleasure from it. You may wonder, what kind of friendship is this? Well, there is nothing wrong with me and Jatin, nor with our friendship.

Jatin is a nice guy, but he has one irksome habit, which I have been trying to cure him of. He likes to have everyone at his beck and call! He just can't resist it—needs only a chance and there, he is ordering you. And it is highly bothersome for me, as I always fall a prey to his wants. So, I had been thinking of teaching him a lesson, but didn't know how to. The chance, however, came last Thursday—quite unexpectedly—at this very restaurant and this very table at which we are sitting at the moment. . . .

Jatin ordered his favourite drink, coffee. When the bearer brought it, he began to take long, lingering sips. Then, suddenly, something struck him and he began fumbling in his pockets. I understood that an order was soon coming up. I waited expectantly.

"Hey, Siddul!" he almost exclaimed, "have you ever tried peanuts with coffee? It's marvellously delicious!"

"No, never!" I replied with equal gusto, but now knew what he was up to.

"Why shouldn't we have some now?" His eyes were twinkling and he twitched his brows mischievously. He was so excited it was as if he had invented a new recipe! "Here's the money," he said, tossing a coin towards me, "bring the peanuts, quick—will you? There is a stall just outside. Hurry now, or the coffee will get cold."

As I was half-heartedly picking up the coin, I sighted the approaching bearer. I immediately took the opportunity of avoiding his order. "Why not we ask the bearer?" I said, neatly placing the coin in his palm. "Oh-yeah! Why not? Bearer! Come here, quick!" he called, in a commanding voice. The rat-faced bearer slowly ambled up to our table.

"Yes, sir, here is the bill," said the bearer laying the plate carefully before us, looking at us as if he was trying to sniff our order.

"Can you bring some peanuts from the stall outside?" my friend asked.

"Oh-yes! Why not, sir?" the bearer replied humbly.

"Then be quick about it. Here's the money." As my friend said this, he winked at me with understandable satisfaction. I winked back, happy at having avoided one of his orders.

Soon the bearer came back and approached our table. However, I could discern some unevenness in his gait. When I looked at his face, I chuckled. I could then imagine how a rat would look when drunk, for that is exactly what he looked like. But how could he have got drunk within such a short time? Our coffee was still hot.

The bearer had brought a packet of peanuts. When he laid it before us, my friend exclaimed, "By Jove! this fellow has brought the peppered ones!" He gave a questioning glare at the stooping bearer.

"E-eeh, w-w-what ddoou uuuu. . . ." The bearer could only utter this when he choked; and before I could realise what was happening, he swung one of his arms wildly. It hit my friend straight on his cheek, and my hefty friend, to my surprise, tumbled down onto the carpet. I screamed and, with my heart beating madly, went to my friend's rescue. I gripped the bearer's stooping shoulders and when I found them as hard as granite, fear crept into me. All the same, I tugged at him, and surprisingly, he yielded to me just as a tall pillar yields to a bulldozer. His body was on the verge of crushing me when I slipped off to one side, allowing him to fall on the carpet with a resounding plonk. He lay spreadeagled on the carpet, his whole body quivering like an idling diesel engine.

I then reached out bravely for my kneeling friend and helped him to get up. It took some time for the two of us to realise that we had been surrounded by people, and from one corner a voice was shouting: "How's that possible? The manufacturer had guaranteed against such a thing! Let me see!" People made way for the owner of the voice. It was the restaurant manager.

When he came face to face with us, he immediately took in the situation, and he shouted out to someone, "Cut the circuit! Cut it!"

Someone did something and the bearer

was no longer trembling; he was dead, as a nail.

"What did you two do to him?" he questioned us almost menacingly.

We were so shocked by all that we had just seen that, for a while, we were unable to speak. What had happened to the bearer? Was he really dead or was he—a robot? Till then we had known that robots are more commonly read about than seen. So even though we might have unknowingly met robots many times before, this was the first time that we realised that we had met one. As soon as the truth had dawned on us, we felt so relieved that we were able to tell the manager everything.

"You mean, that you sent him outside? By God! What foolishness!" exclaimed the manager shrugging his shoulders, his sharp features showing extreme surprise.

"You should have known, my dear friends," said he, in a sardonic tone, "that nowadays all the bearers are robots."

We nodded and exchanged embarrassed glances.

"They, however, can take orders," he continued, "only inside the restaurant. This is because the temperature here is under control. The electronic circuits in these robots function effectively only in a given range of temperature as we maintain here. As soon as there is any change in the temperature—as there is outside—the circuits inside them fail to respond correctly. They then behave curiously. You have just had an exhibition of it! Now, you must always keep this point in mind, whenever you meet a stranger, that every man is not a human being."

My friend Jatin, who had really got quite a shock that day, had digested those words and had even taken an oath not to order anyone anymore. But now, as I recollect that episode and my face betrays my thoughts, he seems to have read my mind.

"Stop that—will you, Siddu?"

He is angry at being teased. But, you see, he has forgotten his oath. But, then, Jatin is after all a human being.

Dilip M. Salwi

WILL THEY MEET?

W/J Columbus Road
'Watt and Volt' Building
POTENTIAL HOUSE
Dated 6 Ergs 1977

My dear Mr. Magnetism:

With 'cells of love', I first saw you strolling across the 'field' of vectors yesterday, and from then on my young heart is constantly vibrating in 'simple harmonic motion'.

In the 'Tan A' position, in which you were sitting in the region at 'two mutually perpendicular magnetic fields', you were looking so handsome that the 'north pole' of my heart was at once attracted towards you.

The 'reflection' of your eyes made a 'real image' from the 'concave mirror' of my heart. The deflection on your face and the 'frequency' of your voice were very charming, indeed, and it made my heart 'charged'.

Since you were in the company of your friends, Mr. Gauss and Mr. Oersted, the end of my mind prevented me from coming to you. I request you now to meet me at the 'Post Office Box' near the 'Wheat Stone Bridge' of Faraday at kilo-watt hour sharp,

and I do hope that you will bring me the 'super-heterodyne (super-het) transistor receiver!

If you will not meet me, the 'circuit' of my heart will break. I shall be forced to commit suicide at the 'neutral point'.

So please do meet me. I will be waiting there, playing on a 'tuning fork'. My mind is full of love for you, with its full 'capacity'. Don't 'discharge' it.

With lots of 'SMHO',

Yours chargefully

(Miss) Electricity

To:
Mr. Magnetism
AC/DC Ammeter Road
'Ohms and Crystal' Building
Grounded floor
Antennial House
Mantissa

(How, do you think, would Mr. Magnetism respond to Miss Electricity? The best 'draft' reply will be published in these columns.—
Editor)

A Mere Village Boy!

I REALLY want to tell you all about it, but I don't know how. You see, I am a village boy and I can't talk much. I mean I can talk all right, but can't describe properly. I mean I can describe... but...well, I hope you understand what I mean. People generally do, because they look at me with a fixed smile and vacant eyes whenever I try to tell them something. Don't you think they are very understanding?

So, wha...a...at happened...d...d, once our teacher went to Delhi. I hope you know where Delhi is, because frankly I don't. It is shown in capital letters on the map, but that does not mean anything. Maps are not reliable. How can you believe any map when none of them shows my village's name? That, too, in spite of the fact that the Deputy Collector himself once dined with our village Chief? Not only that, but our Chief is a great man. You should hear him when he tells how he once waved to Gandhiji during the independence movement. Still, our village's name is not on the map.

So, wha...a...at happened...d...d, when our teacher went to Delhi, he went to a school. Our teacher's brother is also a teacher in a Delhi school and he (brother) took him (our teacher) to attend the school's (Delhi) annual programme. All clear so far?

So, wha...a...at happened...d...d, in the programme there was a debate competition. Our teacher liked it very much, so when he came back to our village, he suggested we should have such a competition in our school, too. Well, if it is done in Delhi, where the Prime Minister and the President live, it must be good to have debates. All the teachers agreed, and the Headmaster, too, was carried away by the Delhi example. So, it was all agreed between them, and they told us that they had decided. Can you imagine?—they just told us. Who bothers whether the lamb wants to be sacrificed or not?

So, wha...a...at happened...d...d, we went to the village Chief. After touching

our heads to his feet three times, we told him was this democracy where nobody cares for our opinions? The Chief just smiled thro' his moustaches as if he had not heard anything. He told us how he had waved to Gandhiji and how he had hosted a dinner for the Deputy Collector. There was no stopping, once he started. When he finished, we told him about the debate. He got angry and said that we were becoming too big for our pants and that we should not import any such nonsense from cities. The next day, the Headmaster and the Delhi returned teacher went to the Chief and requested him to be the Chief Guest at the debate. After describing the handwave and the important dinner, he promptly accepted the invitation.

So, wha...a...at happened...d...d, we were told to take part in the debate. The subject was "India lives in villages". That was a good subject; we after all lived in villages. There was nothing to talk about. In case of dispute, we were accustomed to settle the issue with one or two blows, but the teacher wouldn't allow that. He said we must speak and that, too, in front of the whole school. He told us to give names, so we gave him names. He looked at us and took out his cane. We rushed and gave him our true names, then. All the names were *for* the subject. So the teacher forced me and a few others to speak *against* the subject. Do you see the situation? — there is the Chief who wants to be the Chief Guest, there is a teacher who has returned from Delhi and wants to have a debate, and there is poor me who must speak on a subject which nobody knows.

So, wha...a...at happened...d...d, on the debate day, I just stood near the Chief Guest's table. No word would come out of my mouth. I gulped a few times and looked at the whole school sitting in front of me. Then I got angry; they were actually laughing at me. "Do you want to see a film?" I asked. The students started laughing. We did not have a cinema in our village. I again asked,

"Do you want to see a cinema?" and the students answered "Yes". "Do you want to sit in a train?" The reply was "Yes". "Do you want to see a circus?" "Do you want to see an aeroplane?"—I went on asking, and they went on saying "Yes yes, yes". So, I said, let us all go to the city to have fun and prove that India lives—really lives—in the cities! That is that, and I won a prize. Others simply could not speak at all. That is how I was entrapped.

So, wha...a...at happened...d...d, there was a debate in the city—a district competition. The Headmaster said I must go. I made holes in my pant and shirt to show my unwillingness, but nothing doing. I would be given a new school uniform to appear in the competition, On the

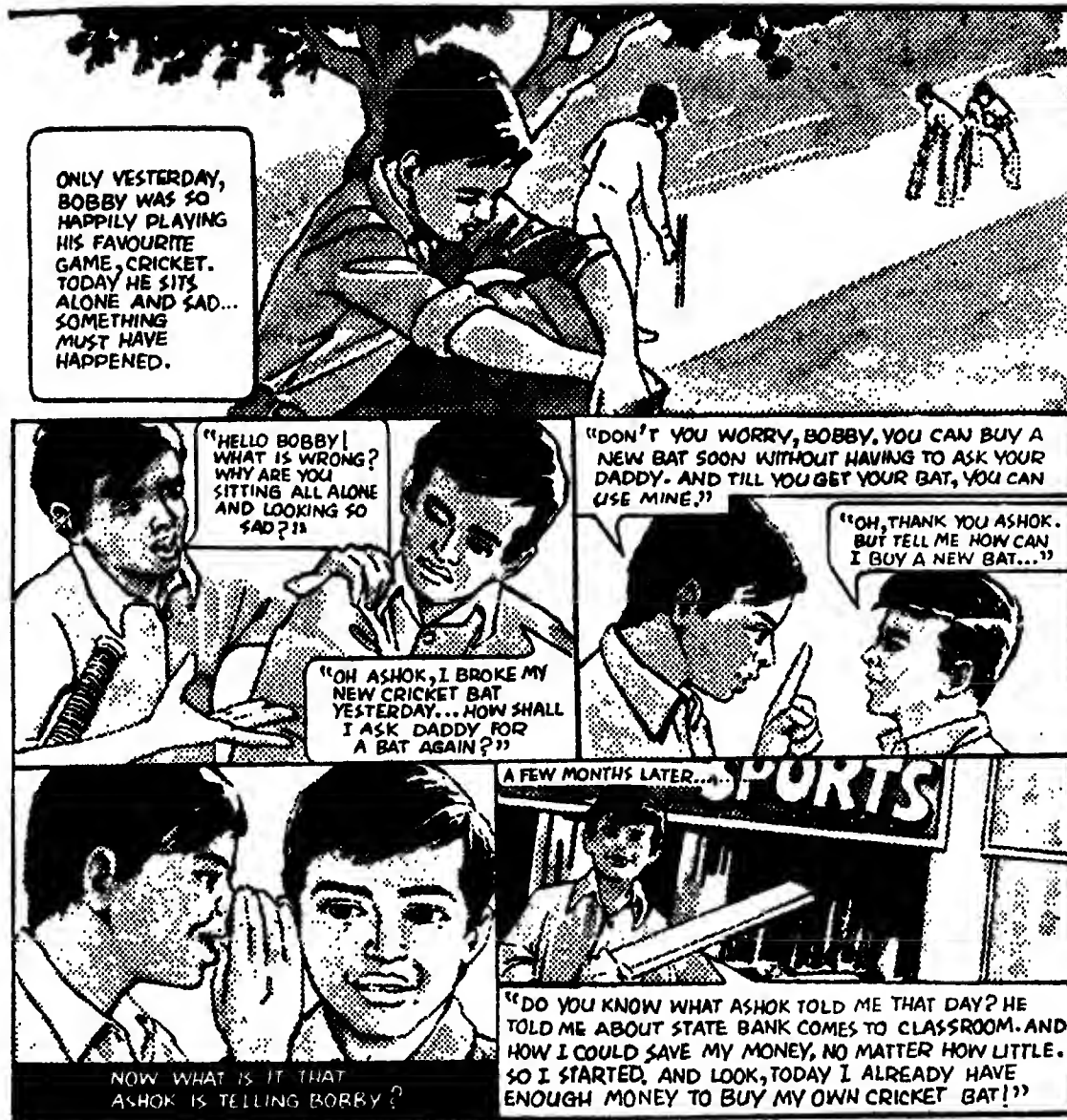


appointed day, I was pulled out of my bed by the Delhi-returned teacher. With half closed eyes, I walked 10 kilometres to catch a bus. It was still dark and he made me take a bath in the river. I was given a new pant and shirt. The new shoes were to be kept in hand, only to be put on after reaching the city. The school there is different from our village school. There women rule. As soon as we reached the school, a woman in a beautiful sari asked my teacher, "From where?" He replied and she dismissed him. My Delhi-returned teacher could not even utter a word. "Name? Father's name? Age?" Somehow or the other I was selected to do the opening ceremony. I did not know what that meant. There was a red ribbon tied across the gate. I wanted to do a flying start and jump over the ribbon, but somebody held my collar from behind. Anyway, I could go under the ribbon also, but somehow I was again stopped, and the woman in the beautiful sari thrust a pair of scissors in my hand.

So, wha...a...at happened...d...d, there I was, a mere village boy, with a pair of scissors in one hand, standing in front of the gate with the red ribbon. There was this woman in the beautiful sari, all the time trying to keep it in shape, and all the people waiting behind. The lady bent down and whispered in my ear, "Cut it." I looked at the scissors and then at my new uncomfortable shoes. I raised myself on my toes and whispered in her ear, "What?" She again bent down and whispered, "Cut it." While I was looking at her hair locks, which were continuously getting into her eyes, she again bent down and said urgently, "Cut it, quick!" Well, if the lady wants it, why not? I cut it. There was a flash, a photograph, and clapping from behind, only the lady was frozen stiff. I was pushed into the hall under the ribbon, with the hair lock in my hand.

So, wha...a...at happened...d...d, what should I tell you? The inevitable has happened, and I am selected to go to Delhi for the All India Debate competition.... A mere village boy....what will I do there?

Rita Pohray



If you are over ten years of age,
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From Vintage Leisure to Feverish Will to Win

TEST cricket resumed after the six-year interruption caused by the World War. The War witnessed the tragic death of Hedley Verity of England, who was till then the greatest left arm spinner cricket had ever known.

Australia now emerged as the strongest cricketing force. Bradman announced his retirement at the end of the victorious tour of England in 1948. He became the first person to be knighted for his contribution to cricket. This honour was later to be conferred on Jack Hobbs, Walter Hammond, Len Hutton, Frank Worrell, and recently Gary Sobers.

England and the West Indies shared with Australia the honour of being the top cricketing teams of the post-War era.

England produced a stream of front line batsmen, like Hutton, Compton, May, Cowdrey, Dexter, Barrington, and Boycott, while their pace bowlers, Trueman, Statham, Tyson, and later Snow pulverised the opposition batsmen over the years. England also had the great swing bowler, Alec Bedser, and the off-spinner, Jim Laker, who once captured 19 Australian wickets in the 1950 Test match at Manchester.

Meanwhile, cricket flourished in the West Indies in the true Calypso fashion—bright, spectacular, and festive. It produced the three W's—Worrell, Weekes, and Walcott—who ranked among the greatest strokeplayers cricket had ever known.

West Indies contributed cricket's greatest ever all-rounder, Garfield Sobers, the only player to have scored over 8,000 Test runs, including the highest individual score in an innings of 365 not out. He has also captur-

ed 235 wickets, and taken 119 catches.

The maximum number of Test wickets have also been captured by a West Indian. He is off-spinner Lancelot Gibbs. He has bagged 311 wickets.

The West Indies have been involved in what is considered to have been the greatest ever Test match; the only Test in history which ended in a tie, with both teams scoring exactly the same number of runs! This was in 1960 at Brisbane, Australia.

Australia has maintained its position as a leading cricketing nation, thanks largely to its post-War batsmen, Morris, Hassett, Harvey, Simpson, Lawry, and the Chappell brothers. Its greatest all-rounder and leg spinner, Richie Benaud, along with the fiery pace-bowlers, Lindwall, Miller, McKenzie, and later Lillee and Thompson, have provided a strong bowling combination over the years.

South Africa, which had developed into a potent cricketing force, was barred from Test cricket in 1968, as a consequence of the world wide indignation at its 'apartheid' policies.

New Zealand, Pakistan, and India have, however, been playing the role of underdogs with few notable performances. New Zealand have had few cricketers of note, apart from Sutcliffe, Reid, Dowling, Congdon, and Turner. Cricket in Pakistan has been dominated by the four Mohammed brothers.

Indian cricket, after years of failure, came into its own when, under the leadership of Ajit Wadekar, India defeated England at

Kensington Oval in 1971, to record their first victory on English soil. Today, India ranks among the leading cricketing nations, thanks to the spinning quartet of Prasanna, Bedi, Venkataraghavan, and Chandrasekhar. They have now served India for over a decade and constitute the greatest ever spin attack in the history of cricket.

Though successes have been few and far between, India has produced its share of brilliant individual performances. Vinoo Mankad and Pankaj Roy hold the Test record for the first wicket, with a partnership of 413 runs. Mankad has also performed the Test 'double' (scoring 1,000 runs and capturing 100 wickets) in less Test matches (23) than anyone else.

Among the other great Indian cricketers have been Vijay Merchant, Hazare, Umrigar, Borde, Gupte, Manjrekar, Pataudi, Engineer, Gavaskar, and Vishwanath.

Mansur Ali Khan of Pataudi, apart from his notable performance with the bat, has led India in 43 Test matches and placed Indian cricket on a firm footing that has enabled Wadekar and later Bedi to lead the Indian team with considerable success.

Test cricket, which has grown steadily over the past one hundred years, bears little external resemblance to the inaugural Test match that was played at Jolimont Paddocks in 1877.

Gone is the vintage leisure of the Victorian, era, when the game was played for the sake of playing. This has now been replaced by a feverish will to win, come what may. Test cricket is now a big time entertainment business, involving the Press, Television, and thousands of enthusiasts, where an event on the field is instantaneously transmitted to all parts of the world, to thrill or disenchant millions of fans.

But, essentially, the character of cricket remains unchanged, where eleven men combine to do their best for the teams; where gallant feats are performed when required most against the heaviest odds.

It is thus little wonder that Test cricket is as popular as it is today!

Vinod Jagtiani

(Concluded)

1877: England Vs. Australia: 1977

HISTORY repeated itself on March 17, 1977 in Melbourne, when Australia won the Centenary Test against England by 45 runs. Exactly a hundred years ago, i.e., on March 17, 1877, Aussies had registered a victory over England by the same margin in the first ever cricket Test in the world.

Weeks before the Centenary Test, Melbourne wore a festive look. The influx of visitors into the city was the highest since the 1956 Olympic Games. As many as 200

former Test cricketers, including almost all the living former cricketers of both England and Australia, went to witness the Centenary Test. The oldest among them was 87-year-old former Australian captain, Jack Ryder. Other former Australian captains included Sir Donald Bradman, Lindsay Hassett, Ian Johnson, Richie Benaud, Bob Simpson, Bill Lawry, and Ian Chappell.

The English line-up, led by 84-year-old Percy Fender, included Bob Wyatt, Gubby Allen, Norman Yardley, Freddie Brown, Sir

Leonard Hutton, Peter May, Ted Dexter, Mike Smith, and Mike Denness. The only other living English ex-captain who played against Australia, Ray Illingworth, could not make it.

In 1877, the Australian team led by D.W. Gregory was handicapped by the absence of star bowlers, Evans, Allen and Spofforth. And a hundred years later, Greg Chappell had a team weakened by the absence of 'Tornado Thomson'. Again, as 100 years earlier, Australia batted first, but this time were bundled out for a paltry 138, as against the 245 scored by their predecessors a century ago. Then, C. Bannerman had scored an unbeaten 165 (he retired hurt) and thus become the first century-maker in Test cricket. Incidentally, his was the only century in the first Test.

The disappointment of Australia was, however, soon converted into glee when England failed to weather the storm unleashed by Dennis Lillee. When Lillee ended the second day with 6 for 26, his best figures against England, Greig's men had the ignominy to be out for 95, the lowest against Australia in 19 years. (The England team led by James Lillywhite had scored 196 in the first innings in 1877.)

Australia's wicket-keeper, Rodney Marsh, took four catches in the England first innings, thereby breaking the record of 187 dismissals by an Australian keeper so far held by Wally Grout. Marsh, however, did not stop there. In the second innings, he hit up a beautiful 110 not out and thus earned the distinction of the first Australian keeper to score a century in a Test. When, with the aid of a 76 by Gilmour and 68 by Davies, Greg Chappell declared the innings closed at 419 for 9, thus setting England a target

of 463 to win, everybody thought that England had no chance to win the match.

Not so Derek Randall. Randall's century put England back in the game. At tea on the last day, England was within sight of victory and Randall was still going strong. Queen Elizabeth II came to witness the match at this stage. But within a few minutes of her arrival, O'Keeffe trapped Randall lbw for 174 and then, within 41 runs, England lost all the wickets and conceded the match by 45 runs. (In 1877, the second innings scores were Australia 104 and England 108.) Though defeated, England's fourth innings total of 417 runs even surpassed the record of 404 scored by India against West Indies at Port of Spain last year.

Randall was adjudged the 'man of the match' and rightly so.

It was a great match in every sense of the word. It offered the record crowd all that they could have wished to see on a cricket ground—brilliant batting, fiery bowling, excellent wicket-keeping, high totals, cheap dismissals, electric fielding, as also dropped catches!

In 1877, there was a return match which England won by 4 wickets. Now Greg Chappell is leading his men to England in April to offer Tony Greig another chance to repeat history.

Ever since 1877, Test cricket has grown tremendously, with more countries joining—South Africa in 1888-89, West Indies in 1928, New Zealand in 1929-30, India in 1932, and Pakistan in 1952. But the game remains glorious as ever—even after 100 years!

G.R.

THE FOOTBALL MATCH

ASHOK was overwhelmed when he learnt that he had been selected to lead his school football team in the finals of the tournament. At the age of 14, he must have been the youngest captain the school football team have had. He had already earned a reputation as a brilliant centre-forward capable of penetrating any strong defence line. When he was in the field, spectators used to go mad with him whenever he dashed forward with the ball. But this, this call to lead the team, and that too in the final, was something beyond his expectation.

Except for young Anil, who was their alternate goal-keeper, Ashok was the youngest member of the team. The school team was led by their reputed stopper, Jacob, a player of whom Ashok was proud. Every school team which participated in the tournament knew that as long as Jacob was there, they had very little hope of taking a ball to the goal area. And, so long as Ashok was the centre-forward, no defence line-up could be foolproof.

From the start of the tournament, the school was fully confident of winning the trophy. And right through to the semifinals, they did not admit a single goal against them. But, much of their confidence waned away when Jacob broke his right leg in the semifinals. Ashok was among those who openly wept when Jacob was carried away halfway through the match. And much to the team's disappointment, they conceded the first ever goal in the absence of Jacob. The team did win the match 3-1, but none of the players had felt happy about it. But it was this incident that led to the naming of Ashok as captain, though many senior players resented the choice.

As the team met for practice, Ashok was able to gain the confidence of most

of his team mates. "When Jacob was our captain," he told them, "he was our leader. But, now, there is no leader and there is no follower. We are one body, one mind. We will win the match, because you all, senior players are there."

Ashok's joy was, however, short-lived. The result of the second semifinal proved that his team would be meeting the team of Ramu, his old rival. Ashok had been waiting for an opportunity to settle scores with Ramu, who was instrumental in causing him ignominy and shame. The incident was still vivid in his mind.

That was three years back. Ramu was in the same school as Ashok and they were great friends. They shared interest in football, films, and reading. Ramu, the senior of the two, had access to his father's collection of books and often lent books to Ashok.

One evening, they were going home from school, when a boy riding a bicycle knocked down Ramu. Enraged at this, Ashok pulled the boy down from the bike and slapped him across the face. He returned the blow and soon there was a fight involving the three. But the boy with the bike had to run away, as he found he could not stand against two. Ashok and Ramu decided not to mention this incident to anybody.

When the headmaster sent for Ashok the next morning, he was at first baffled. It was soon clear that he had known everything about the previous day's incident. Ashok was subjected to severe caning by the headmaster. All the time he was wondering how the news reached the headmaster and how Ramu escaped all blame. But the headmaster himself let the cat out of the bag, when he said he was punishing Ashok for "picking up a quarrel despite the best efforts of Ramu to dissuade you."

So, Ramu himself had gone and reported to the headmaster, blaming Ashok and absolving himself of everything. Ashok met Ramu the same evening and shouted, "Look here, you scoundrel, this time you succeeded in betraying me. But don't think that you've got away with it. I won't let you go like that."

"No, no, Ashok, listen, it is not my fault. My father...." Ramu was shouting after him, but Ashok ran away without listening.

Ashok had no opportunity to carry out his threat, as Ramu changed his school following a transfer to his father.

Here now was the chance, thought Ashok. During this match, I will try



to kick him, kick hard so that he will remember it for a long time. Let him know that Ashok is not to be played with like a toy. And when it happens in the midst of a football match, nobody will suspect anything. Ashok lay awake for a long time during the night previous to the match, thinking of ways to deal with Ramu.

The all important moment came. Spectators had filled every available inch of space even half-an-hour before the start of the match. The rival teams were introduced to the Education Minister, who was the chief guest. During the introductions, Ashok happened to look into the eyes of Ramu. No, there was not even the slightest sign of recognition there.

The match started. Ashok noticed that Ramu had changed his usual position and was playing as right-out. That lessened the chance of a direct hit against him. However, chances will come, he thought.

Ashok was brilliant in his passes and in the third minute after the whistle, he hit the rival net. As deafening uproars filled the stadium, Ashok seemed to forget all about Ramu and made many stormy passes to the rival goal mouth. Soon, he was the proud owner of a hat-trick. When the match ended with a 4-nil victory for Ashok's team, many of his school fellows ran to the centre of the stadium, garlanded the day's hero, and carried him on their shoulders all the way back. Everybody agreed that Ashok was at his best that day.

He was soon called upon to receive the glittering trophy from the Minister, who praised "the extraordinary performance of the little boy, who was the hope of the future". Ashok passed the trophy to his team mates and was coming back from the dais when he saw Ramu running towards him. Ashok was for a moment perturbed and did not know how to face him. But Ramu was all smiles.

"Oh, Ashok! Ain't I glad to see you again! Ain't I proud! You were brilliant, my friend, simply brilliant!"

Ashok could not but reciprocate the warm hug offered by Ramu. "You know, Ashok, I am ashamed of myself," said Ramu. I had come here with the firm resolve that I would not even talk to you. But I could not control myself; forgive me for anything I have done to you. I am so sorry for everything."

"Forget it, Ramu, forget it," Ashok could not believe that he was uttering these words. He felt the anger and hatred towards Ramu melting away in his heart. Ramu was his friend. How nice of him

to have congratulated him despite all that had happened.

"I've been a worse sinner, Ramu. I had even thought of hurting you in the match. Oh! what a silly fool am I!"

"We are good old friends, aren't we?" As he felt Ramu's arms on his shoulders again, Ashok could not help weeping. His mind seemed to become lighter and happier. How soothing is friendship, he mused.

Radhakrishnan

WHERE CHAMPIONS ARE MADE!

THE Children's Sport School of the Central Soviet Army Club Team in Moscow is very popular with the young figure-skaters. At present, more than 300 boys and girls are undergoing training at the school. In the preparatory groups, the children learn to stand on skates and master the first elements of figure-skating. Later

The children are taught not only to skate but how to fall, as it is very useful — the ice is very hard.



on, the most capable of them continue to improve their mastery in the main group, where training is more tense and serious. A number of the most talented and hard-working children from here make their way into big-time sport.

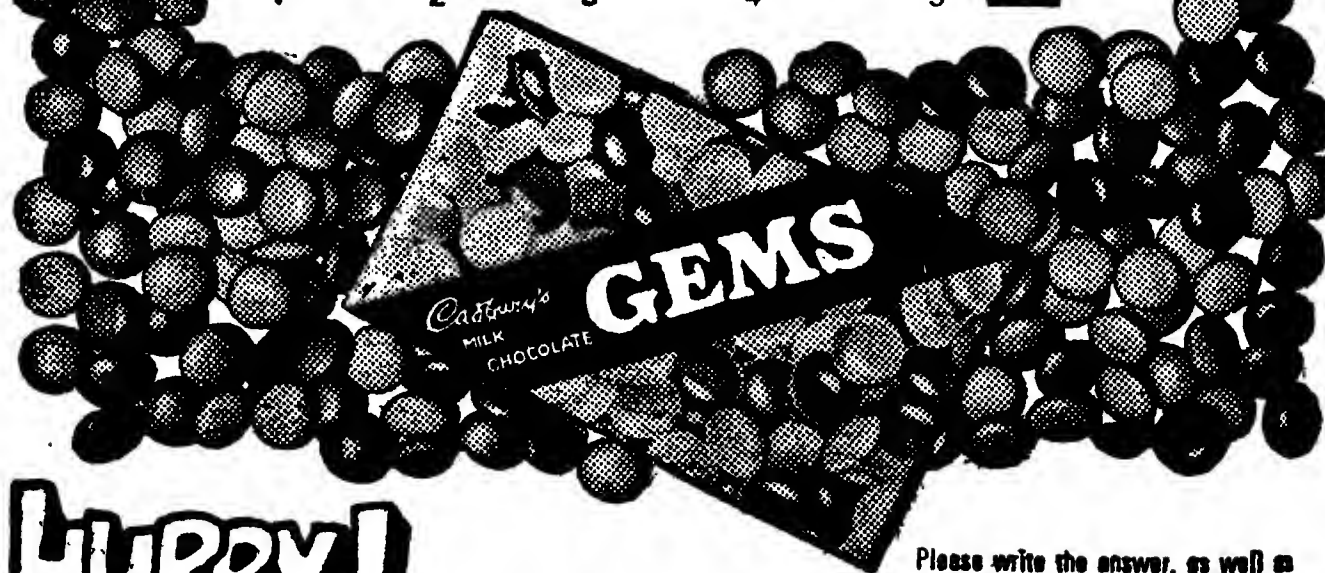
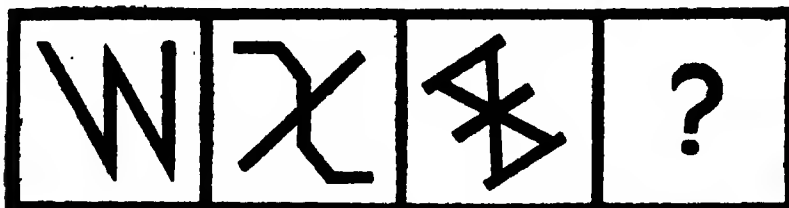
The school has two indoor rinks for all the year round training and one open-air skating rink. The health of the children is carefully watched by experienced doctors. Children are trained by highly qualified sportsmen, making lessons interesting and pleasant both for the coaches and the children.

Of course, not all the children will become famous as the world renowned skaters, Irina Rodnina and Alexander Zaitsev, Lyudmila Pakhomova and Alexander Gorshkov, Irina Moiseeva and Andrei Minenkov. However, the time spent at the school will not be in vain, for boys will grow up flexible, strong, with a well-developed body, and the girls healthy and graceful.

FUN WITH GEMS

1001 LUCKY PRIZES TO BE WON

Which of the five numbered figures fits into the vacant space?



HURRY!

Send in your answer accompanied by one empty plastic packet of Cadbury's Gems. The first 1001 successful entrants will each get a State Bank Gift Cheque for Rs. 11.

Please write the answer, as well as your name and address, in English only, and in block letters. Mail entries to:

"Fun with Gems" Dept. B-35
Post Box No. 56, Thane 400 601.

Last date for receiving entries:
30th April 1977

COLOURFUL, CHOCOLATE-CENTRED *Cadbury's* **GEMS**

CHAITRA-C-89

Tit for Tat

THERE was a whirring sound, as the fat bee buzzed and buzzed in Kalu's sack. Kalu, the wily old fox, was making his way towards his den. Although he wished to go home hurriedly, he knew he couldn't! His wife had asked him to get her some vegetables for their dinner. And that is why Kalu was taking a roundabout route. Yes! there was a farmhouse just a few yards away. He quickened his steps, and knocked loudly at the door. A woman opened it. "Please, madam, could you keep this sack for me until I return? and don't, for heaven's sake, open it." A sly smile curled Kalu's lips. He knew how to trap these innocent farmers' wives. The kindly woman nodded her assent, while Kalu darted off to the old farmer's cabbage patch.

The farmer's wife was curious! Minutes later, the inquisitive woman was opening the sack to see what it contained. A little peep was all that she had, when out flew the bumble bee, happy to be free at last. And what do you think happened next? The farmer's grey hen, that always sat by the window sill, caught it just in time to flick it straight into her mouth. "That was a fast morsel," she thought, as she swallowed the bee down.

Just then, Kalu returned with a couple of fresh green cabbages that he had conveniently pinched from the farmer's patch. Although fear was written on the woman's face, she tried to conceal it when she handed back the sack to Kalu. Kalu, you know, was the most cunning fox in the neighbour-

hood, so he coolly untied his sack to throw the cabbages in, guessing what had taken place in his absence. "Now, where is my bumble bee, may I know?" he asked in the gentlest manner.

"Oh, dear! on dear! I must confess. My old grey hen swallowed your bee by mistake, the old woman said. She was on the verge of tears.

"Well, dear woman, I shall have that wicked hen of yours in return," wily Kalu replied. It didn't take Kalu much time to catch the old hen, who clucked frantically while Kalu put her into his sack. Then throwing the sack across his shoulder, he trotted towards his home.

He had gone barely a few yards when he saw a nice little cottage! In front of the cottage was a big broad patch of fresh green spinach. It made Kalu's mouth water. He thought in his wily fashion, as he smacked his greedy lips with delight, 'I must add a few bunches of those juicy leaves in my sack.' Kalu made decisions on the spot. So, he quietly stepped into the cottage, and asked the lady of the house politely, "Would you allow me to keep this sack in your cottage for a little while? I am in a hurry, as I have some urgent work on hand, but I promise I will be back as soon as possible." He moved towards the door and then paused. "But, wait," he whispered, "I must tell you something. Please do not open the sack." That tone of his had made the little woman curious all right.

Kalu made a beeline for the spinach patch,



and hid himself behind a big bush. As soon as the woman had closed the door behind him, Kalu began pulling out the spinach, as though the whole patch belonged to him.

Well, you can picture what exactly was taking place inside the cottage, isn't it? The woman, as soon as she had closed the door, went towards the sack. 'I wonder what precious thing lies hidden in that sack?' she thought. She cut off the string, and the next moment a scream was heard. The grey old hen had nearly scratched her face while flying out of the sack. Now it sat proudly on top of the mantelpiece. The frightened woman began to chase it helter-skelter, which was, of course, the wrong thing to do. The old hen flew out into the yard and landed near a litter of piglets warming in the sun. The mother pig didn't like her children being disturbed and chased the hen right out of the farmyard. It was seen running towards the forest.

Can you imagine how happy our Kalu was? He grinned that 'foxy grin', as he had witnessed everything in front of his very nose. Kalu walked in slyly and asked for his sack.

The little woman was almost in tears. "Please, forgive me for opening your sack. I didn't know there was an old hen inside. When it flew out in the open, our pig chased it away."

'What luck!' thought Kalu. He said aloud, "Well, since I cannot get my priceless hen back, your wicked pig shall be punished." Kalu defiantly walked out into the yard, and caught the pig off guard. Then pushing it deep into his sack, Kalu ran away as fast as his trained legs could carry him. Do you think Kalu had forgotten the spinach? Oh, no! He returned after some time to take the spinach that he had carefully hidden behind the bush.

What was Kalu's next move? Well! he was heading towards another farmhouse. The lady there owned a big orchard, and didn't Kalu's mouth water at the thought of those luscious apples? He trotted **FASTER!** There he was at the door. Kalu knocked. "May I please come in?" he pretended to

plead. Then he continued, "Ah! Poor me. How weary I am! Could I rest awhile here, before I go back home?" The kindhearted lady quickly gave in to his request. Was that a sly wink? It certainly was, because the very next moment Kalu said, flicking his toes, "How very forgetful I am! I put it as old age. My wife had asked me to get some vegetables for tonight's dinner. I must hurry up before it is too late. Could I ask a favour, please? May I keep this sack in your kitchen till I come back?" Kalu knew fully well how to act.

"Well, of course, you may," said the farmer's wife. Women are said to be inquisitive and this lady was no exception. She pretended to busy herself in the kitchen, but was really waiting for Kalu to turn his back. You should have seen the way she rushed towards the bulging sack. Her curiosity almost killed her with fright at the sight of the fat pig that grunted and pushed itself out of the sack. The woman screamed so loudly that it frightened the pig, which bolted away across the orchard, where Kalu sat, eating apples. 'What untold bliss!' thought wily Kalu, as he grinned from ear to ear. The stars were in his favour today! Or so he thought. Kalu was happy to see the fat pig running for its life. Hadn't he all these cunning plans well laid out? Of course, he had! He shook his crooked face, as he went up to the house once again. He knocked on the door as though he were in a hurry, and quickly asked for his sack. "Getting late, you know," Kalu said to the bewildered woman. Kalu's eyes turned into question marks, as he lifted the empty sack. "Where have you hidden my pig?" he demanded. Then, he shook clean his sack, and was pleasantly surprised to find that the cabbages and spinach were missing, too. (It was, of course, the pig which had eaten it all.) "So you have hidden my pig, and also taken away my cabbages and spinach?" asked Kalu, in an angry tone.

This woman was never in the habit of telling lies, but just this once, to defend herself, she blamed her little son for opening Kalu's sack. "You must believe me when I tell you that my little son opened it only when he heard the sad grunts from within

the sack. I shall try to find your pig for you as it must be in the orchard now."

"I have no time to catch the pig now. But I would like something in return for my pig," said Kalu brightening up.

"Ask and you will get it," replied the woman in haste.

"I shall take your little son. I shall teach him not to open other people's sacks," Kalu was quick to reply.

"Oh, no—you can't do that," wept the lady, who suddenly realised that her white lie was going to cost her her little son's life. Quick as lightning, Kalu snatched the whimpering boy, and dumped him in his sack. And off he went!

"It's my lucky day... I am so happy... it's my lucky day," Kalu sang all along the way. What a grand dinner was in store for his family! Never had Kalu been so gay. And then it happened! A sweet aroma wafted towards his nose. 'Ah! that's a lovely smell,' thought Kalu. It was the smell of freshly baked cakes coming from a nearby farmhouse. No, he didn't want to miss this golden opportunity. A quick knock brought an elderly woman at the door. She looked a pleasant woman, just the type that Kalu could cheat. He played the same trick once more. "May I leave this sack of mine here for a little while?"

Sure enough the woman replied, "You may, by all means."

Kalu then made a dash towards the vegetable patch behind the kitchen and began pulling out some radish and cabbages. How he sighed and laughed to himself, at the number of foolish people he had cleverly tricked.

Now, inside the cottage, the elderly woman was setting the table for tea. Her two sons were already seated at the table. Soon the good old lady brought in the cakes.

"Delicious! Mother, you can really bake the most wonderful cakes," said the elder son.

"Can I have another cake, please?" asked the younger son.

"Of course, go ahead," replied the mother.

"May I have one of your cakes, too?" said the little boy from within the sack.

"Good lord! that sounds like a child's voice," cried the old lady.

"And, Mother, the voice came from the sack that the fox has left behind," said her elder son.

They quickly cut open the sack, and were they not surprised or rather shocked beyond words to see a little boy crying bitterly? The old woman lifted the frightened and

hungry boy out of the sack, and quickly hid him in her bedroom.

In the meantime, her two sons thought of a fine plan. They whistled to their alsatian, Fido, and pushed him into the sack saying, "Play your part well, Fido, and come home as soon as the game is over. Don't forget to give the wily fox a good taste of your teeth, and be sure of a fine juicy bone on your return." They all had a hearty laugh then.

You can imagine, now, what became of Kalu on his return when he opened his sack!

Fifie Mendonca

A Tale of Two Trees

IN a thick jungle near the bank of a river lived two trees who were very good friends. The trees spent their time happily listening to the murmur of the water and the twitter of the birds. There was always something or the other going on in the jungle and the two trees had a lot to talk about.

One day, there was a terrible storm. The wind blew with tremendous force, and the trees were badly shaken. But, while the taller and thicker tree did not sway much, the smaller one swayed badly.

After the storm had died down, a change could be seen in the taller tree. Addressing the smaller one, it said, "Look at yourself, little friend, how thin and tiny you are! No one will ever select you for any work. Just look at me. See how fine I am and how stout my trunk is."

The little tree was extremely hurt, and it replied, "I don't mind. I just want to be kind to animals and men, and give them shelter, if I can."

"Ha, ha, ha, Ho, ho, ho," laughed the taller tree and said, "This is not the kind of world you are dreaming of, my little friend. This world is too sly and selfish for humble beings like you."

The little tree fell into dreams, crumbling at the harsh words of its strong friend.

One day, two woodcutters came to the

jungle. "Look at this tree," said one woodcutter, pointing to the larger tree.

"But it is too large for us to carry. Look at the other one," said the other woodcutter. "It would serve our purpose equally well."

So, the little tree was cut down and its wood helped to build a nice cosy hut. As the little children of the woodcutter ran in and out of the hut, playing with each other, the tree felt very happy. Its dream had at last come true.

Many months passed.

It was winter in the jungle. All the trees had shed their leaves. One day, the same two woodcutters, who had cut down the smaller tree, appeared once again on the scene. They took out their axes and started cutting the big tree. The tree was delighted and thought that it was going to do the world a great turn. But its delight was not to last long. It soon found itself being chopped into firewood. It, no doubt, gave warmth and comfort to people, but for a very short time.

And as it burnt, it realised that sometimes it is tenderness and kind-heartedness which is of more use to others than strength and pride.

*Bani Balvir (10)
India*

An Envelope Tells a Tale

I AM a postal envelope.

I now look old and worn out. I have reached the end of my journey. I lie, in a pile of waste paper and rubbish, in the big dust bin at the Dead Letter Office. In all likelihood, I will be given away to the 'raddiwala,' or turned into ash by a fuming flame while men sit around the pile to warm themselves.

Before I am turned into pulp or ash, I would like to tell you my exciting tale.

The first thing I recollect clearly is my arrival, in a neat bunch of envelopes, at one of the post offices in a remote town in India. I was stacked in a rickety almirah. I lay there along with other postal stationery. Postcards, thick and strong, grinned at me and my brothers. Inland forms strained restlessly against the band which kept them down. They were eager to be up and around. There were also money order forms, telegraph forms, ledgers, and account books—all keen to see the world.

I waited a long time for my turn to come. At last, I was picked up, along with others who formed my pack. We were dropped on a side rack by the postal employee who sold us. We knew then that we would soon begin our journey.

I was in the middle of the pack.

The postal employee ripped off the band which held us together. He rushed his thumb over the edges. Now, we were not so tightly packed.

One by one, the envelopes on top of me moved out. They were bought by different people. A few of them were bought by a smart youth. He bought a dozen envelopes and put them in his brief case. Two more were bought by a young girl. She was holding on to a few newspaper cuttings. Was she in search of a job? Then came a tall farmer, with a blanket wrapped around him. He bought one envelope. Just one.

I was now right on top of the pile. Who would buy me? I did not know.

I saw a short, stout man looking at us through the wire net of the counter where the postal employee sat. His shirt looked

faded. He had bristles all over his unshaven chin. He looked sad and depressed.

I was not happy to go with him. But I had no choice. The man pushed in a 25 paise coin. He said, "An envelope, please."

The postal employee picked me up. He checked that I did not take away the next envelope with me. Then, he handed me over to the man.

The man held on to me. He moved over to a corner where there was a writing table. He borrowed a pen from someone standing nearby. He wrote on me: 'TO GOD IN HEAVEN'.

Then he pulled out a sheet of paper, folded into four, from his shirt-pocket. He carefully put the sheet inside me. Then, he rubbed my flap against his moist lips. He pushed my flap down. It now held me tight, with the sheet safe inside.

I waited for the man to add the name of the town and the Pin Code. I had been told that every town has a Pin Code, and that the Pin Code helps quicker delivery of mail.

The man did not bother. He held me firmly in his hand. He walked over to the post box outside the post office. He looked at me, hopefully. Then he dropped me in the red mail-box.

It was dark inside. I was hit again and again by fresh letters which were pushed into the mail-box. In fact, I had to step aside when a big fat envelope came down. It hit a postcard!

Suddenly, we heard the sound of a key turning in the lock. A small window at the bottom of the mail-box opened out. We felt greatly relieved. We vied with each other to get out.

The postman, whose duty it was to collect us, picked us up in bunches. He dumped us into a big stout bag. He pressed us down so as to accommodate more letters. Then he tied up the mouth of the bag. Once again we lay in darkness. He swung the bag onto his shoulder, and carried us off.

I was badly bruised when I was thrown



out, along with other envelopes and postcards, by the postman. I lay quiet in a corner.

I heard someone shuffling through the pile of letters. I could also hear an occasional thud. I saw a postal employee picking up the letters one by one. He sorted them out according to the Pin Code numbers.

At last, he picked me up. He read the address. He screwed his eyes strangely. He peered at me as if I was a freak.

He turned to one of his colleagues and shouted, "Here is something very strange, Kalu Ram. See this letter, it is addressed to 'God in Heaven'!"

Kalu Ram dropped the 'bidi' he was smoking. He stared at his friend and shouted back, "Well! That must have been written by some madcap. Send it to the Dead Letter Office."

The postal employee picked up a big, heavy seal. He struck the seal against a pad. Then, with a hammer-like blow, the seal came down on me. I took a good look at my body. I was no longer sleek. There was now a big embossment.

I was dropped in a small pile meant to be sent to the Dead Letter Office.

Hours later, I was pushed into a small bag, along with those who lay along with me in the pile. All of them carried strange place names. Or off-beat addresses.

We were all being taken to the Dead Letter Office. We were not dead. But, we suspected that at the Dead Letter Office, we would be killed.

After a few days' journey by train, we reached the Dead Letter Office.

A postal employee picked us up. He had a big, bushy moustache. I watched the moustache swing up and down when he read the names on the letters.

Finally, it was my turn. He picked me up. He read out aloud, 'TO GOD IN HEAVEN'.

He laughed. He muttered to himself, 'Some madcap has wasted 25 paise.'

He tore open the flap. He fished out the sheet of paper that lay within me. The sheet, folded into four, ruffled when he opened it out.

He read what was scribbled on it:

'God! Help me! I am in a tight corner. I need Rs 50 urgently. I must have the money to buy seeds. If I don't get seeds, I can't till my little piece of land. And, then, I will be left without anything. My family will starve. My wife and children will die. And I, too, will die. God, help me!'

The letter brought tears to the eyes of the postal employee. He stood up. He walked over to the clerk who was supervising the work. He gave the sheet of paper to the clerk. He raised his eyes quizzically. "What is it, Ram Singh?" he asked.

"Shamji, here is a letter from a poor farmer. He wants Rs. 50 urgently. He has sent this letter to God!"

"Ah! Put it along with those that cannot be delivered. Is the address of the sender available?"

"Yes, Shamji."

"Then, send the letter back to him. Let him at least know that the letter has not been delivered."

"No, Shamji. Let us help the poor man. Let us take up the role of God."

"What do you mean?"

"We can collect the amount, and send it to the poor farmer."

"Not a bad idea. How much can you spare?"

"Two rupees, Shamji."

"I'll give you three rupees. See how much you can collect."

Ram Singh began to raise funds. In ones and twos and threes, money began to flow in. At last, Ram Singh raised Rs 50.

I watched everything. I felt happy that I was doing a good deed. I was responsible for conveying the request of the poor farmer. Of course, I was lucky to fall into the hands of a kind-hearted man, like Ram Singh. Some other employee might have laughed at me, and thrown me back into the pile for returning to the sender.

The postal employees were in good spirits. They hailed Ram Singh. They filled up a Money Order form. They entered the address of the farmer. In the space meant for NAME OF SENDER, they wrote: GOD IN HEAVEN.

I am sure the money would have reached the farmer. He would now be hurrying to buy seeds. His family won't starve.

I look old and worn out. My days are numbered. I am now lying with the pile to be sold to the 'raddiwala'. Or to be burnt to provide warmth to the employees! I don't mind what happens to me now. I have done a good turn. I have done my duty.

R. K. Murthi

Dear Reader,

Here is a unique opportunity to make friends with the children of the world.

Nearly 2,000 children from various countries are members of the Children's World Pen-Friends Club. If you, dear reader, are not already a member, you can become one by filling in the attached coupon and mailing it to us. After enrolment, your name and other details will appear in the "Pen Friends Corner".

EDITOR

CHILDREN'S WORLD PEN-FRIENDS' CLUB

Dear Editor,

I would like to be a member of the Children's World Pen-Friends' Club. My subscriber No. is—

Name: Master/Miss _____
(IN BLOCK LETTERS)

_____ (age*) _____

Address: _____

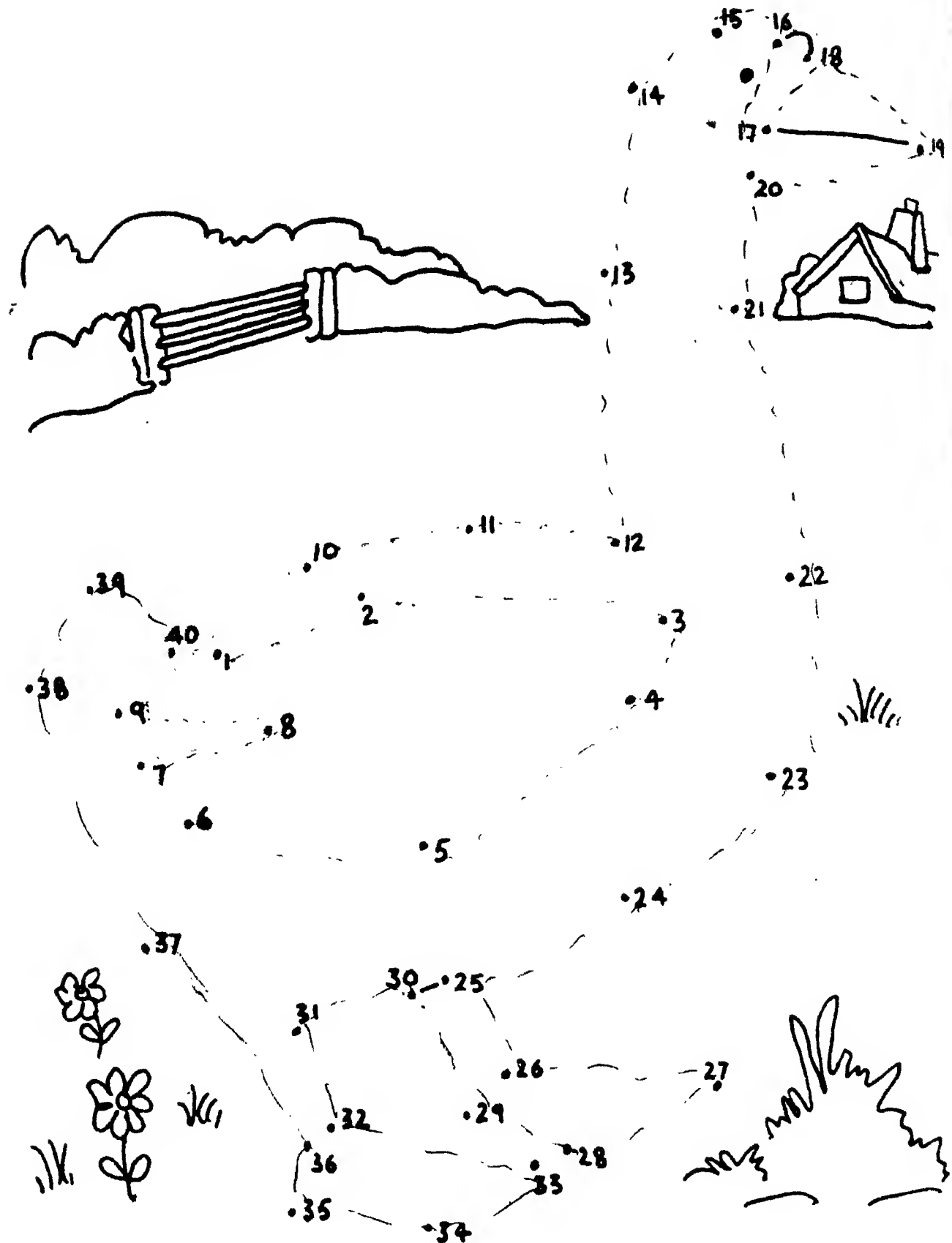
Hobbies: _____

Pen-friend wanted in (Country) _____

*Age limit: 16 years

Signature _____

JOIN THE DOTS !



PUZZLES

PUZZLES

PUZZLES

PUZZLES

WORDS WORDS WORDS

I The Missing O's

Each of the following sets of letters is a complete word, except for the three O's which are missing. Fill in the three O's in the most appropriate places so as to form a sensible word:

1. SCILGY 2. ZLCY 3. MNSN 4. BRTH-
ERD 5. CRNATIN 6. UTLK 7. PPSITIN
8. LKUT 9. CRPRATIN 10. PRPSITIN
11. CPERATIN 12. NTRIOUS 13. CMPSI-
TIN 14. HMEPATHY 15. FREFT 16.
- HIRSCPE 17. HMGENEUS 18. RNI-
THILGY 19. SNRUS 20. FTHILD

M. Vasmi Abidi (13)

II. Know Your Ologies

1. The study of glands, 2. The study and investigation of the air or of atmospheric phenomena especially in relation to flying, 3. The study of the customs of primitive peoples, 4. The science of plant growth and nutrition as applied to improvement of crops and control of soil, 5. A formal spoken or written defense argument to show that some idea, religion, etc. is right, 6. The branch of theology dealing with angels, 7. The science of anesthesia and anesthetics, 8. The science that deals with bacteria, 9. The science dealing with climate and climatic phenomena, 10. The branch of Zoology that deals with mollusks and shells.

Prasad Rao (14)

III. Missing Vowel and Consonant

A vowel connects a word under A to a word under B.

A	B
PAR	THIEN
CAR	ON
MAN	CURE
ME	PET
CAP	CITY
CAB	ABLE
PIT	VAN
MILL	TENT
HE	SURE
PEN	NET

A consonant joins a word under A with a word under B.

A	B
BE	AGE
BY	NET
DO	ICE
ME	END
MY	RID
NO	BED
OF	ACE
SO	ASS
TO	ARE
WE	ELF

N. S. Rajan

IV. Words Within Words

1. A five letter word. The last four letters are related to 'weather'. The whole word is an important part of the body.
2. A nine letter word. The second and third are a preposition. The last six are another meaning of 'constant'. The

whole word is an employee of the police department.

3. A six letter word. The last five mean 'mountain slope'. The whole word is a colour.
4. An eleven letter word. The fourth and fifth form the name of an important river in Italy. The last six mean 'equal distribution'. The whole word is an organization.
5. An eleven letter word. The last five are a piece of furniture. The fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh are a castle-like building. The whole word means 'convenient'.
6. A ten letter word. The first five indicate 'establish'. The last three are a group of atoms. The whole word means the base of anything.
7. An eleven letter word. The second and third are a heavenly or religious sound. The last eight indicate 'application'. The whole word means 'test among equals'.
8. A three letter word. The last two are a preposition. The whole word is something used as protection from sun and rain.

S. Siva Kumar (12)

QUIZ

I Books and Authors

Match the following titles of books with their authors.

1. Great Expectations, 2. Ram Charit Manas, 3. Gulliver's Travels, 4. Treasure Island, 5. King Solomon's Mines, 6. Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, 7. Ivanhoe, 8. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 9. Little Women, 10. Alice in Wonderland, 11. The Seven Pillars of Wisdom, 12. The Pilgrims' Progress, 13. Robinson Crusoe, 14. Unto This Last, 15. Uncle Tom's Cabin.
- (a) Tulsidas, (b) John Ruskin, (c) T.E. Lawrence, (d) Daniel Defoe, (e) Jules Verne, (f) Mark Twain, (g) John Bunyan, (h) Rider Haggard, (i) Harriet Beecher Stowe, (j) Jonathan Swift, (k) Charles Dickens, (l) Lewis Carroll, (m) Louisa M. Alcott, (n) Sir Walter Scott, (o) R. L. Stevenson.

A. V. Rao

II Sports and Games

1. When and where was the first Olympic Oath taken?
2. When was the first World Basketball Championship held?
3. In which sport might you 'chop'?
4. When did the ancient Games end?
5. When was the first World Volleyball Championship held?
6. When and where did the second of the modern Olympic Games take place?
7. When did India first compete in the Uber Cup Badminton tournament? Where was it played? Who was the winner?
8. Who 'closed' the Olympic Games of 1976?
9. In which game does the winning team go backwards?

Varughese John (13)

III Inventors and Inventions

Match the names of inventors with their inventions:

- (a) George Stephenson, (b) Leonardo da Vinci (c) Henry Ford, (d) Archimedes, (e) John Boyd Dunlop, (f) Enrico Fermi, (g) Thomas Alva Edison, (h) Galileo, (i) Johann Gutenberg, (j) Marconi, (k) Samuel Morse, (l) Humphry Davy, (m) Anton van Hock, (n) Alexander Graham Bell, (o) Diesel, (p) Wright Brothers.

1. Telegraphic code, 2. Telephone, 3. Cinema and Gramophone, 4. Motor car, 5. Camera, 6. Telescope, 7. Radio, 8. Steam Engine, 9. Geometry Code, 10. Atom Bomb, 11. Printing type, 12. Microscope, 13. Diesel engine, 14. Davy's lamp, 15. Aeroplane, 16. Pneumatic Tyre.

Ashu Khullar

IV General Knowledge

1. Which two seas does the Suez Canal join?
 - a) Black Sea, b) Adriatic Sea, c) Red Sea, d) Mediterranean Sea.
2. Whose novels have the following characters?
 - a) Pickwick, b) Fagin, c) David Copperfield, d) Scrooge.
3. Which famous scientist is known as the Wizard of Menlo Park?
 - a) Alexander Graham Bell, b) Henry

- Ford, c) Thomas Alva Edison, d) Marconi.
4. Which is the capital city of Zambia?
a) Cairo, b) Addis Ababa, c) Algiers, d) Lusaka.
 5. Which is the Dark Continent?
a) Asia, b) Europe, c) Australia, d) Africa.
 6. Who painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome?
a) Leonardo da Vinci, b) Michelangelo, c) Raphael.
 7. Which of these planets is the hottest in the entire Solar System?
a) Venus, b) Mars, c) Earth, d) Mercury
 8. Which is the Red Planet?
a) Saturn, b) Pluto, c) Mars, d) Jupiter.
 9. On which river is the Hirakud Dam constructed?

- a) Sutlej, b) Chambal, c) Damodar, d) Mahanadi.
10. Which river in Africa runs across the equator two times?
a) Niger, b) Nile, c) Congo, d) Orange.

Shobha Iyer (11)

RIDDLES

1. Why did the man climb a tree and start praying?
2. What is smaller than an ant's mouth?
3. What is worse than biting into an apple and finding a worm inside?
4. What is black and white and red all over?
5. Why did the chicken cross the street?
6. What did one telephone say to another?

Saloni and Suha

- The Missing O's**
1. Sociology, 2. Zoology, 3. Monsoon, 4. Brotherhood, 5. Coronation, 6. Outlook, 7. Opposition, 8. Lookout, 9. Corporation, 10. Proposition, 11. Cooperation, 12. Notorious, 13. Composition, 14. Homoeopathy, 15. Forefoot, 16. Horoscope, 17. Homogeneous, 18. Ornithology, 19. Sonorous, 20. Foothold.
- Know Your Ologies:**
1. Adenology, 2. Aerology, 3. Agriology, 4. Agrobiology, 5. Apology, 6. Angiology, 7. Anesthesiology, 8. Bacteriology, 9. Climatology, 10. Conchology.
- Missing Vowel:**
PARAPET CARAVAN MANICURE MEASURE CAPACITY CABINET PITABLE MILLION HEATHEN PENITENT.
- Missing Consonant:**
BEWARE BYPASS DOTAGE MENACE MYSELF NOTICE OFFEND SONNET TORRID WEBBED.
- Words within Words:**
1. Brain, 2. Constable, 3. Orange, 4. Corporation, 5. Comfortable, 6. Foundation, 7. Competition, 8. Hat.
- Books and Authors:**
1(k) 2(a) 3(f) 4(o) 5(h) 6(e) 7(n) 8(f) 9(m) 10(i) 11(c) 12(g) 13(d) 14(b) 15(i)
- Sports and Games:**
1. The VIII Olympic Games at Antwerp in 1920, 2. 1949, 3. Table Tennis, 4. 393 A.D., 5. 1950, 6. Paris, 1300, 7. Dec. 21, 1956, against Malaya, at Kuala Lumpur; India won 4-3, 8. Lord Killanin, 9. Tug-of-war.
- Inventors and Inventions:**
a-8, b-5, c-4, d-9, e-16, f-10, g-3, h-6, i-11, j-7, k-1, l-14, m-12, n-2, o-13, p-15
- General Knowledge:**
1. Red Sea and Mediterranean Sea, 2. Charles Dickens, 3. Thomas Alva Edison, 4. Lusaka, 5. Africa, 6. Michelangelo, 7. Mercury, 8. Mars, 9. Mahanadi, 10. Congo.
- Riddles:**
1. So that he could be closer to God.
2. The food the ant eats.
3. Finding half of it.
4. A zebra blushing.
5. For some fowl reason!
6. Heard you are engaged.

ANSWERS

Heard This Before ?

Sally: Mother, look at that man, he hasn't a hair on his head!

Mother: Sh-h-h! He might hear you.

Sally: Oh, doesn't he know?

★

Frank: My sister is in the K.G. class, and she can already spell her name backwards.

Freddie: How smart! What's her name?

Frank: Anna.

★

Mrs. Brown: I hear your son is an author. Does he write for money?

Mrs. Black: Yes, in every letter that he sends.

★

Tommy: That man wasn't a painless dentist, after all.

Dad: Why, did he hurt you?

Tommy: No, but he yelled just like any other dentist when I bit his thumb.

V. Karunakar (15)

Son (to father): Father, I know the jam factory, soda factory, match factory, and the soap factory. But where is this satisfactory?

★

Artist: Where is the picture of apple I had hung up here?

Servant: I ate it today.

Balaji Prathap (9)

A doctor was attending on an old lady who had caught a severe cold. "Did your teeth chatter when you felt the cold coming on?" asked the doctor.

"Well, I really can't tell you that, doctor. You see they were lying on the table," she replied.

★

Mother: Well, my boy, did you learn much on your first day at school?

Son: Not enough, I have to go back tomorrow.

★

"Now, we know that the earth is round," said the teacher. "Tell me, Thomas, would it be possible for you to walk round the earth?"

"No, Miss!" replied Thomas,

"And why not?"

Because I twisted my ankle while playing football."

★

A disgusted parent wrote this note of complaint to the teacher: 'If all Herbert is going to learn in school is to swear, I will keep him home and teach him myself.'

Roy Sequeira (12)

Prakash's rank is 11th in the class. One day:

Father: Prakash, this year also you could not stand first in the class. I really don't know how you will improve your studies.

Prakash: Don't be desperate, father. I will surely stand first, if the first ten students go away from the school.

Simi Barman (13)

First Aid Instructor: What would you do if a small child swallowed a key?

Learner: I guess, I'd climb in through the window.

Athar Husain (13)

Ashok: How much is that tie?

Shopkeeper: Twenty-five rupees.

Ashok: Why, I can buy a pair of shoes for that.

Shopkeeper: Yes, but how would a pair of shoes look around your neck?

★

Teacher: What is the strongest water power in the world?

Student: My mother's tears.

Manish K. Shah

Id-ul-Fitr : A Day of Thanksgiving

IN the evening of the twenty-ninth day of Ramadan (see *Children's World*, November 1976) the people look out for the new moon. If it is sighted, then it means that the day following will be Id-ul-Fitr. If the moon is not seen, then the thirtieth is the obvious last date of the month of Ramadan. (All the months in the Islamic calendar have either twenty-nine or thirty days. None has twenty-eight or thirty-one, as in the English calendar.)

Id-ul-Fitr thus marks the end of fasting (during Ramadan) and the beginning of the month of Shawwal. The word 'Id', meaning 'feast', itself conveys the significance of Id-ul-Fitr. It is, naturally, a day of joy for those who fasted during Ramadan. For them is Id.

It is a general principle in Islam that, in every act done, the remembrance of Allah (the Compassionate and the Merciful) is denoted in some way or the other. So, as the day of feast dawns, people start getting ready for the special thanksgiving prayers. After taking a bath, they apply perfume all over their body and put on new clothes, and they partake of something sweet before they set out for the 'Idgah'.

Soon, the streets get crowded, as streams and streams of people make their way to the Idgah. They may be of any nationality, they may speak different languages, but they are all united in having Allah's praise and glory upon their lips. They recite in Arabic:

Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest,

There is no god save Allah;

Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest,

And for Allah is the praise!

All this is in the 'sunnat' (custom) of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace).

The Idgah is actually an open ground outside the township. It is also an essential 'sunnat' to offer the Id prayers outside the township. Of course, the prayers are offer-

ed in congregation. People normally proceed to the Idgah by one route and return to their homes by a different route, which, again, is a 'sunnat'. The rich and the poor, the landlord and the labourer, those who wear new clothes and those who are attired in old ones, all stand in rows, shoulder to shoulder, regardless of any distinction. Then the thanksgiving prayers begin. To witness the whole congregation going through the various formalities, and all in straight rows upon rows is indeed a proof of the unity that binds them together.

After the thanksgiving prayers, the 'Imam' or the person leading the prayers, delivers two sermons from the pulpit. The people then embrace each other, and the congregation slowly disperses.

The rest of the day is usually spent in greeting and visiting each other. It is noteworthy that the feast or Id does not mean only joy and merry-making. It enjoins on everybody not to forget the obligatory prayers which are offered five times a day.

Id-ul-Fitr signifies our humble gratitude towards Allah the Almighty for all his kindness, and especially for enabling us to fast during the sacred month of Ramadan.

Shams Khwaja (13)
India

THE LIMIT ?

An infinity lies above us,
But what about below?
Below the crust will we colonise?
Or is the seabed as far as we'll go?

A haven from the elements,
Domes of steel and plastic;
But what if we destroy our last resort?
The consequences would be drastic.

Live and die in the murky depths,
A canopy of blue,
Is this in the future,
Ahead for me and you?

Mark Green (11)
Australia

THE CAT AND

AT the beginning of time, no one was scared of the Tiger as we are today. He was absolutely clumsy and useless as a hunter. He made so much noise that all the animals scattered away to safety when they heard him coming. They even made fun of him from a distance by shouting, "Oh, Lord Tiger, first learn to walk silently before you try going on a hunt!" This really angered him all the more because he was hungry and found no prey.

He realized that unless he did not learn the skill of hunting, he would soon starve to death. Suddenly, he thought of his cousin, the Cat. The Cat was a swift and silent hunter and always had a contented look about her. She prowled through the jungle like a silent shadow and got her prey. The Tiger decided to request the Cat to teach him how to be a skilful hunter.

So, he went to the Cat and said humbly "Dear cousin, will you teach me how to hunt and catch my prey? I'll serve you faithfully for three whole years if you teach me all the skills."

The Cat was flattered that such a strong and fierce animal as the Tiger should seek her help. So, she said, "All right, cousin Tiger, I'll teach you the skill of hunting and you shall be my servant for three years."

From that day onwards, the Tiger became the Cat's apprentice. He was always at her beck and call. He ran errands for her, cooked their meals, and kept the cave clean. The Cat, in turn, fulfilled her promise. She taught him the secrets of her skill. First, she taught him how to prowl through the jungle very silently. Then she taught him how to sniff the wind to get the scent of other animals in the vicinity. She taught him how to stand absolutely still, so that the other animals would not suspect his presence. They hunted together every day, and the Tiger proved himself to be an intelligent pupil. He mastered everything that the Cat taught him, in no time. In fact, he even surpassed the Cat sometimes, and this made her feel jealous of her pupil.

'If I'm not careful, the Tiger will soon be a better hunter than me, and that will never

do,' she thought. And so the Cat very cunningly decided to keep to herself one special secret of her hunting skill.

Soon, the three years of the Tiger's apprenticeship were over. He asked the Cat, "Cousin, have you taught me all the secrets of your hunting skills in return for my faithful service to you?"

"Yes, indeed, I've" the Cat replied, knowing truly well that she hadn't.

The Tiger, of course, did not doubt anything, and he went away quite satisfied with the knowledge acquired. He hunted all by himself. The other animals soon started fearing him. The days of mocking him were over. They never heard him coming through the jungle, and he pounced on them unawares, without giving them a chance to run away. Even the swiftest of animals, the Gazelle, became his prey. The Tiger mentally thanked the Cat for making him such a good hunter. Gone were the days of starvation!

One evening, as the sun was setting, the Tiger crouched behind a clump of tall grass near a small stream. He thought, a thirsty animal would soon come for a cool drink of water and he would serve as his prey for supper. The Tiger waited silently still and lo, behold! a healthy looking brown Monkey came prancing down to the streamlet to quench his thirst.

'Aha, that Monkey will be quite enough for my supper,' the Tiger decided gleefully as he licked his lips.

He waited for sometime till the Monkey began to drink the water. Then he pounced on him. But the Monkey was smarter than he had anticipated. He twisted and wriggled out of the Tiger's paws and ran towards a group of tall trees a little away from the stream.

FROM BURMA

HER PUPIL

The Tiger was furious. More so, he was humiliated that such a small mite of a Monkey should trick him. 'The Monkey shall not escape me,' he growled. 'I can surely run faster than him. And he stamped right after him at full speed.

But the Monkey grabbed one of the low hanging branches of a tree and swung from one to another, higher and higher, till he had reached one of the topmost branches.

When the Tiger reached the tree, he

jumped at the very branch the Monkey had clung to. But, to his shock, he fell to the ground with a big thud! Once again, he made an attempt to get hold of another branch, but with the same result. The Monkey cackled loudly from above, and that added fire to his anger.

'That wicked Cat did not teach me to climb trees,' the Tiger snarled. 'She deceived me and lied that she had taught me all the secrets of hunting.'

And, indeed, this was the one special secret the Cat had kept hidden from the Tiger. And that is why to this day tigers do not know how to climb trees!

PINKIE

CLASSROOMS IN ZOO

GOING to the zoo is not just a matter of looking at animals, as many thousands of Melbourne school children are discovering.

For them, the zoo is an important place of learning.

The Education Service at Melbourne's Zoological Gardens encourages school children to observe, ask questions, and form opinions about wildlife, the environment, and conservation.

It began in 1969, with one classroom converted from a pavilion. Now it has four classrooms which were visited in 1976 by more than 65,000 children.

Teachers and zoo authorities have been concerned that children who live in urban areas may lose touch with the flora and fauna of the Australian countryside. It has been felt that children, particularly those living in inner-city areas, had become isolated from wildlife. The zoo education service is providing one way to re-establish this contact.

The view is that children should experience wildlife before they begin to learn

about it. This is why the service put a lot of emphasis on developing sensitiveness towards animals. The children are asked to look, listen, feel and smell.

The classroom sessions at the zoo are informal. Talking is done mainly by the children and lessons are illustrated with video equipment. Children have to be careful not to disturb some classroom



A young girl and her teacher make a model of an elephant in clay.

residents, such as a sleeping echidna (spiny anteater), a lizard or two, a tortoise family, or a possum.

The walls, floors, even the classroom ceilings are covered with interesting things to see and touch. After the classroom discussion, the children go to a zoo enclosure to look at the particular object of study.

They are also encouraged to paint, draw, or model the animals in clay. The visits are often used to develop vocabulary among younger children. Recently, a session on the theory of flight was held beside the bird enclosure.

It is hoped that through an interest in questions about animals, the children will develop a knowledge of, and an interest and concern for the native fauna.

Younger children are encouraged to consider many aspects of animal behaviour, such as why and how animals defend their territory, protect themselves, procure their food, select mates, care for their young, and communicate.

One area of study is "Operation Zoo". Children are taught that much more can

be expected from a visit to the zoo than just gazing at animals in their cages. Patrons of modern zoos, they are told, expect to see animals presented in attractive surroundings representative of their natural environment. Children are urged to consider the needs of the animals, the work of the keepers, and the recreational values of zoos to the public.

MOLDAVIAN VILLAGE ZOO

Many animals, unusual for Moldavia, like the brown bear, a camel, hares, and snakes, monkeys, and peacocks can be seen among the several types of animals and birds kept at the village zoo, founded on the initiative of a local teacher, Fyodor Vatavu, in the forest park near village Chuchulya. Recently two lion cubs were added to the collection at the village zoo.

The inmates of the zoo are looked after by school-children under the supervision of their teachers, veterinarians, and foresters.

Children coming in close contact with animals, not only study their way of life and behaviour, but are able to learn the laws of nature and become active defenders of environment.

A group of Moldavian children 'discuss' a lion cub with a veterinarian.



A TEMPLE OF SERVICE

The world is full of human suffering and the sick, who have neither 'home' nor the loving care tempered by compassion. They provide endless vistas of service. And yet, there are few people who voluntarily accept responsibility for looking after the millions who suffer in silence and live without hope. An exception is Group Captain Leonard Cheshire, VC, DSO, DFC, a bomber pilot, and the most decorated officer of the Second World War. Having seen human suffering and the incalculable horrors of the most devastating conflict in human history, Group Captain Cheshire is a one-man 'Task Force' dedicated to bring succour to the incurably sick and the disabled.

In this feature, SUBHENDU SANYAL writes about the man and his mission, based on an exclusive interview with Group Captain Cheshire—who was in Delhi for the opening of the Children's Wing of the Delhi Cheshire Home.

AUGUST 9, 1945. The War in Europe was over and the dazed people of a devastated continent were reeling under the cruel impact of the clash of armies. Peace had returned, at last, but it was the peace of the graveyard. At the other end of the world, the Japanese were still holding out, ignoring the call to surrender. But the ring round the mainland was closing. The Allied Powers had given a final warning to the Japanese by dropping an atom bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, reducing the city to rubble and killing more than 40,000 people. A new and more terrible weapon of destruction had been unleashed to bring the global conflict to a speedy end. Three days later, the second atom bomb hit Nagasaki, with disastrous consequences. The loss of life was appalling, and the Japanese realised the utter futility of continuing the War. On the same day, the Japanese High Command surrendered, and the War was over. Among the eye-witnesses of the bombing of Nagasaki was Group Captain Leonard Cheshire of Britain's Royal Air Force, a bomber pilot. An "observer" on the U.S. Air Force's bombing mission, Group Captain Cheshire had a grand-stand seat as it were when the atom bomb hit Nagasaki.

I met Group Captain Cheshire in the V.I.P. lounge at Delhi airport on one of his recent flying visits to Delhi. Group Captain Cheshire, who had a busy day in Delhi, was kind enough to spare time to talk to me, while he waited for his flight. But, there was nothing hurried in the way he spoke to me; and I could sense an inner calm, which is so much a part of his character.

I was curious to know about his reactions to an event which had brought untold suffering to countless people, even though they were 'enemies'. Group Captain Cheshire answered: "I have got to be honest and say that you cannot talk of the atom bomb, except in its historical context. Up to August 6, 1945, when the first atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, 55 million people had already died in the War, which had lasted six long years. As far as one could see, in the absence of an unknown event, the War was going to last another year, and it could only be ended by the invasion of the Japanese mainland itself. The Americans were planning to land 3,000,000 men in the southernmost island of Japan in November 1945, and another 2,000,000 men in March 1946. It was estimated that this was going to cost 3,000,000 lives. The alternative was

to try to persuade the Japanese to stop fighting by dropping the atom bombs on specified targets to demonstrate their destructive effects. It was thought that this would act as a deterrent and make the Japanese realise that it was futile to continue the conflict. And, remember that there were only two atom bombs at that time. So, in a sense, it was a bluff to persuade the Japanese that if they did not give in, then the atom bombs would keep coming. I have got to admit that when I saw the second atom bomb drop on Nagasaki, I thought, O thank God, the War will now be over, because everyday more and more people were dying and human misery was mounting. Obviously, this could not go on. Looking back on the two atomic air attacks, one realises, of course, that 140,000 people were killed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is a relatively small number compared to battle casualties in a big encounter or a major air raid. But still it is a large number and it shows you something of the destructive potential of modern science and technology. My main thought is not about the atom bombs, but what we can do as human beings to prevent such a thing happening again. I think that the War, which culminated in the dropping of the atom bombs, has made me realise that each of us has a healing role to play; so let us play it."

Unlike most people, Group Captain Cheshire did not become a mere preacher, but plunged into active social work to help his less fortunate fellowmen. It was a debt that he owed to humanity, and he embarked on a novel project to help the incurably sick and the physically handicapped. He wanted to give them a 'Home', where they could find love and care.

I wanted to know what made him launch his project, which has grown to international dimensions. This is what he told me about this unique institution: "You know we had fought the War for peace, and so I felt I wanted to do something in the same cause. I wanted to go on doing something to prevent another war. That sounds very presumptuous for an individual. But I think that most individuals, in their hearts, would like to feel that they are doing something



The youngest member of the Delhi Cheshire Home gets a pat from Group Captain Cheshire (extreme left).

to prevent War and make the World more united. But this was only an idea until, in 1948, I came upon face to face with an old man dying of cancer in a hospital in England. The hospital did not want to keep him because there was nothing more to be done for him. And I myself could not find any place for him to go to. So, I took him to my house and nursed him until he died. And, it was then that I suddenly realised what I could do to help the incurably sick who had no place to go to. I wanted to give these unfortunate people a 'Home', where they could be looked after with love and care. Where they would have a sense of belonging."

The international organisation responsible for the functioning of these Homes is the 'Cheshire Foundation Homes', which was established by Group Captain Cheshire in 1948 and has its headquarters in London. Cheshire Homes are now functioning in 51 countries. The United Kingdom has the

largest number of Homes (66). India comes next with 16 Homes; another three are under construction.

The Cheshire 'Home' came to India in 1956, when Group Captain Cheshire set up a 'Home' at Kalkaji, in South Delhi. The project immediately caught the imagination of a number of people, who were enthused by the missionary zeal of Group Captain Cheshire. Among others who came forward to help was Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. With characteristic generosity, he helped in securing a 3.5 acre plot of land for the 'Home', where it is now located, and also donated Rs. 2,00,000 from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. With this, the process of transformation and development had begun. The idea had taken roots, and it took almost 16 years before the Cheshire Home moved to its present location.

In 1972, on October 2, Gandhi Jayanthi, a day sacred to all Indians—the new building of the Cheshire Home was opened in the sylvan surroundings close to Okhla, the famed picnic spot in the Capital. It was a modest affair mainly functional, consisting of an administrative block, two blocks for the residents, a sheltered workshop, living quarters for the Matron and other workers, and a kitchen block. Initially, only adults and old persons were accepted as residents. However, in 1974 the Cheshire Home had to take in the additional responsibility of looking after a few mentally retarded and disabled children, who had become 'homeless', because the institution that was looking after them had closed down its residential wing.

With the first lot of children admitted to the Home, the request for receiving more children started pouring in, until the number swelled to 14 children. They were accommodated along with the older people in the male and female wards. This arrangement was not satisfactory because of the special needs of the children. It was, therefore, felt necessary to build additional accommodation for the young residents.

Once again, the Delhi Cheshire Home was launched on a new venture. Work on

the construction of the Children's Wing began at the end of May last year and was completed in the record time of less than six months. The Children's Wing, which is equipped with all modern amenities, is also provided with special furniture and fittings needed for children. And, on November 17, the President of India, the late Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, declared open the new Children's Wing.

The Cheshire Homes organisation has been able to secure a competent cadre of men and women, specially trained in the difficult task of looking after the adults and children under their care. When I asked Group Captain Cheshire about this aspect, he said that in the U.K., an 18-month course is available to train men and women, boys and girls, in the care of the long-term disabled. This, he added, was a special vocation.

Group Captain Cheshire had a special word to say about the role of youth in implementing the projects. He said the greatest need was personal interest in the welfare of the residents. For example, a visit to a local Home to develop personal contacts with the residents would go a long way in making their lot happier. The young people, for instance, could talk to them or just take a guitar and play to the inmates.

Group Captain Cheshire is a truly remarkable person. Perhaps, the finest tribute paid to the architect of this unique concept of service was by that great humanist Jawaharlal Nehru. Deeply moved by the work that the Cheshire Homes were doing in India and the personal example of Group Captain Cheshire, Pandit Nehru said, "They (Homes) are a remarkable example of what can be done by earnestness and enthusiasm. Most of us are apt to lose the personal touch. The big schemes may still be necessary for Government to undertake. But the type of work that Group Captain Cheshire has been doing with great success seems to me essentially of even greater importance than these big schemes. Of course, the two do not conflict but help each other. He has shown how limited resources can be made to go a long way."

The Sagar Brothers and Sisters

THIS is the story of John Sagar, a 13-year-old boy, and his younger brother and sisters.

In the winter of 1844, John appeared at the gate of Dr. Marcus Whitman's medical mission in what is now the State of Washington, in the U.S.A., carrying his starving five-month-old baby sister. He was limping before a weak cow, on whose back were perched two sisters, one aged 8, with a broken leg, and the other 5, who helped to support the leg. Two more sisters aged 3 and 7 walked beside his 11-year-old brother, Francis. In all they were seven.

John Sagar and his five younger sisters and brother had made their way from Fort Hall to Whitman's mission, a distance of 500 miles, over the Oregon trail, then a little more than a cart track.

The track used to be often attacked by hostile Red Indians and was so difficult that the migration, which John's father had joined, went to pieces. Some families died on the way, some turned towards south over to California, but John with his brother and sisters came through.

The record of this strange children's expedition starts in early July 1844. Kit Karson, a legendary character of America, galloped into John Sagar's camping place and told him to put out the fire, as a band of angry Red Indians was marching towards them. John sent his little brother and sisters in to their bullock cart. He put down the tiny blaze of dung cakes and waited for further orders from Karson.

In reply to Karson's questions, John said that his father and mother were in the bullock cart. Both of them were suffering from dysentery. The other members of the caravan had moved forward and were about two days' journey ahead of them. Karson told John to hitch the oxen to the cart at once and move forward all night and day as much as his strength permitted.

After a few days, John reached another camp where six families were staying. One

of the men was a veterinary doctor. John stopped the cart close to the camp and talked to the doctor. He told him that for two days his mother had been too ill to nurse the baby and that he could not make the little thing drink cow's milk. The doctor climbed into the cart and found John's father and mother dead! When he told this to John, he would not at first believe it.

The Sagar children continued with the caravan till they reached Fort Hall. At Fort Hall, they were stopped by the man in charge of the trading post. He told them that the track to Oregon made by Dr Whitman, a missionary doctor, was impassable. The other members of the caravan therefore decided to go to California, instead.

John would not listen to the advice. His grief for his parents had now turned into ambition. Ever since he could remember, he had heard his father talk of making a great farm in Columbia. John decided to go on to Columbia to fulfil his father's desire.

He abandoned the bullock cart. The cow and the oxen carried the packs of food and beddings. He had learned from an old lady how to feed the baby. The next morning they all moved away, leaving a false note so that they would not be followed. John and the other children crept along the valley to Fort Boise nearly 300 miles away. Barren plains, brutal mountains, scorching heat by day and biting cold at night, mosquitoes and fleas were a heart-breaking test even for grown-ups. Yet, one September afternoon they crept up to the gates of Fort Boise. Except for a ragged pant and still worse ragged shoes, John was practically naked. His sunfaded hair fell to his shoulders in a tangled mass.

The man in charge of the fort was used to all sorts of hardships, but when he saw the boy, he uttered an oath of shocked surprise. John asked with fierce eagerness if there was a woman in the fort. Something had to be done for the baby, as she was vomit-

ting whatever she ate. The man with increasing horror looked down at the tiny figure in his arms. There was no woman in the fort, and the man suggested a nursing Red Indian woman, but John would not agree. Someone had warned him of the diseases a child would contract through the outmoded methods of the Indians.

By now Francis had come up with the oxen and cow, and there disembarked such a rabble of wild, half-naked girls as the man had never seen before. He ordered his cook to feed the children and watched while they ate the stew, gobbling and fighting like puppies. John stood aloof and chewed down a piece of meat as he held the baby.

The man suggested that John should leave the baby and the two little sisters in the camp, but he refused. The baby's one chance of survival was to get through to Dr. Whitman's mission with all speed. After a night's stay, the man sent them under the care of two good Red Indians, but a few days after they, too, disappeared along with their horses!

While crossing the mountains, the oldest sister slipped and broke her leg. John used the hard packed snow to keep down the swelling. The baby was very weak and John was not sure if she was breathing at all. He abandoned the starving oxen and kept the cow, which still yielded a small quantity of milk for the baby, and served as transport for the sister with the broken leg.

With frostbitten feet, sores bleeding due to dirt and fatigue, the children began the last lap of the journey. They covered 5 to 6 miles in a day, huddling at night like little lambs under a rock or against a fallen tree warmed by log fires. A hundred times during the journey the younger children shrieked that they would go no further, but John was very firm and forced them to walk.

Finally, they climbed the last crest and stood gazing into the vast valley to the west. The snow was blood-stained below their tiny feet. John's feet were tied in strips of buffalo skin. His long hair was bound on the back by a piece of leather

string. In his arms, the baby wrapped in a wolfskin lay motionless. Following John was the cow. On her back, the eight-year old girl was huddled under a bit of blanket which she shared with the five-year old sister. Francis, with his grey eyes, dim with hunger and exhaustion, his pants reduced to mere threads and his flannel shirt like a decoration across his chest, brought up the rear with the other sisters.

Stumbling, rising, panting, but in a silence more tragic than weeping, they moved down the valley and stood before the Whitman mission. Dr. Whitman's wife, Narcissa, gave a little cry when she saw them and held out her arms towards the bundle in John's arms. Her only child, a girl of two, had drowned a few years before. She groaned as she turned back the wolfskin and saw what lay beneath.

Dr. Whitman took a look at the baby, while the six young children waited in breathless silence. The doctor thought that the baby was perhaps still alive, and Narcissa took her into the house and laid her in a warm bath, while her husband herded the other children into an outhouse and began the job of turning the Sagar children into human beings. But John followed Narcissa into the house. Bathed, rubbed with warm oil, and wrapped in soft wool, the baby showed no sign of life until Narcissa began to drop hot diluted milk between her blue lips. After several moments, the little throat contracted and a weak moan, something less than a mouse squeak, came forth. At this sound, John dropped to the floor, wrapped his arms about her knees, laughed, groaned, and then limped out of the room.

All that night Narcissa sat with the baby in her lap. John washed himself and in decent garments, slept on a blanket on the floor beside her. What thoughts passed through Narcissa's mind that night nobody will ever know. Towards dawn she roused the doctor and told him that she wanted to adopt the Sagar children.

And here John's story ends. Little John Sagar, not yet 14, had fulfilled his father's dream of making a home for the Sagar family in the Columbia valley.

G. V. Joshi

"A Citadel to be Saved from Invaders"

April 7 is World Health Day. It marks the anniversary of the coming into force of the Constitution of the World Health Organization. The aim of World Health Day every year is to interest the people in a theme of importance for the health of mankind. The theme for this year's World Health Day is "IMMUNIZE AND PROTECT YOUR CHILD". Naturally, of special interest to children and their parents.

Vaccines are these days widely used with outstanding success in the developed world. It has, however, been estimated that in the developing nations, only 5% of the children get effective protection against diseases. World Health Day this year intends to tell people in these countries more and more about the necessity of vaccination for preventing a number of diseases.

We have the unique privilege of carrying in this Annual Number a thought-provoking article on immunization by the well-known science-writer, Ritchie-Calder.—Editor

WHEN a discovery is new, people say, "It is not true." When it has been proved to be true, people say, "But, of course, it is not new." Well, hundreds of millions of people are the living proofs of man-contrived immunization, but it is also true that it is not new!

Millennia ago, Thinking Man discovered that victims of an infectious disease, who survived, were unlikely to have a recurrence. The ancient Chinese knew it; the ancient Hindus knew it. Thucydides, the Greek historian, had good reason to know it; he was a victim of the great pestilence in Athens in 430 B.C. and survived to record that the sick and the dying would have received no nursing at all if it had not been for the devotion of those who had already had the plague and had recovered from it, since it was known that no one ever caught it a second time.

Voltaire, that pillar of the Age of Reason, was not so reasonable. He himself had nearly died of smallpox, but he was outraged by the behaviour of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who had deliberately transferred live smallpox to her children. She was the wife of the British ambassador in Constantinople

and had learned the practice from the Turks who had in turn learned it from the Circassians, who themselves had learned it either from the Chinese or the Indians. The Circassians had a profitable commerce in girl-slaves to the rich homes in the Middle East. The girls were certified both health and beauty-wise by being given live smallpox in childhood! The outraged Embassy chaplain protested: "It might work for infidels, but will never work for Christians."

It did work, for infidels and Christians alike, but was risky because live human smallpox was being transferred, usually from mild cases but with no sure means of estimating virulence. Nevertheless, in spite of threats of lynching, Zabdiel Boylston, who had inoculated his son and two negro slaves in the Boston epidemic of 1721, provided public inoculations for 244 persons.

In 1768, Voltaire, 50 years older than when he had upbraided Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, recanted and persuaded Catherine of Russia to have the puncture method of inoculation against smallpox which had been used in 30,000 cases with only a 4% mortality. The Empress took the gamble, and included her son, Grand Duke Paul.

Country-lore of many countries had long accepted the fact that dairymaids, who contracted cowpox through milking, never took smallpox. Edward Jenner, a country doctor who had had scientific training under the great John Hunter, saw its possibilities as preventive inoculation. For eight years, Jenner pursued his cautious observations and then, in 1796, performed the first vaccination (vacca, the cow) on a small boy, James Phipps, using matter from the arm of a milkmaid who had contracted cowpox in the usual way. The experiment was put to the drastic test of inoculating Phipps with a virulent smallpox. The immunization proved successful.

In 1976, vaccination against smallpox reached its culmination. The last cases of smallpox, in a world population of 4,000,000,000, were tracked down in the Ganges Delta, in the foothills of the Himalayas, in the jungles of South America, in the recesses of Ethiopia, and among the nomadic tribes. There was still no specific medication against the virus, once it was active in the patient, but if the case were isolated and contacts vaccinated, the disease could not spread. This deadly and disfiguring scourge, the pockmarks of which had been found on the mummies in Egyptian tombs, which had rampaged like a forest fire in recurring epidemics, and which had decimated armies, had been brought to the point of extinction.

This achievement is the more remarkable when one considers the superstition, the scepticism, and organized opposition to vaccination. Distinguished doctors, who should have respected the overwhelming evidence, supported the opposition! Bernard Shaw, who regarded vaccination as a semi-savage rite, satirized, in *The Doctor's Dilemma*, Sir Almroth Wright, the eminent immunotherapist, in his character Sir Colenso Ridgeon. ("Opsonin is what you butter the disease germs with to make your white blood corpuscles eat them.")

Immunization may be of ancient origin, but immunology is comparatively new; that is, an art has become a science.

Our body is like a citadel, resisting alien invaders. Each of us have genes peculiarly

our own—unless we have an identical twin. Anything which does not match our genetic identity card will be rejected. We are beset by micro-organisms. By and large, we are pretty well protected by our outer defences. The skin, unless it gets broken or damaged, will keep out germs. Our eyes, which seem such delicate portals, are well protected by the lavage of our tears, which contain a powerful detergent (lysozyme) that dissolves germs. The mucus of the nose and the saliva of the mouth are another trap. The sneeze and the cough are the forceful forms of rejection. The linings of the passages to the lungs and the stomach, and particularly the stomach itself, react chemically. But if all that fails and an infection gets into the blood stream, then there is a Red Alert.

The intruders are called "antigens". The garrison are "antibodies". But in the complexity of nature, each different antigen needs a specific antibody. Each disease has to be counter-attacked specially. For instance, if a child has never had measles and becomes infected, it will have no antibodies, but the body will respond by creating them. While they are mobilizing, the antigens will be multiplying. The onset and the damage will be severe unless or until the antibodies gain mastery. But once the battle is over, a special task-force of measles-antibodies will remain on the garrison-strength ready to repel the next invasion which will not gain a foothold.

With modern knowledge, the successes against epidemics have been spectacular since World War II. Today, a child can be protected from birth onwards against the diseases which once killed or maimed. This, alas, is not true in the developing world where millions of children are killed by common infectious diseases, which could be prevented by immunization. The World Health Organization and UNICEF, in an impressive partnership over the years and in all parts of the world, are specially concerned with the vulnerable age-groups, the infants and growing children. We talk about "investment in human resources", and it behoves us to see that the potential assets—the young—do not become social liabilities, physically, mentally and temperamentally impaired.

WHERE VIRUSES TELL STORIES !

VIMLA IN VIRUSLAND

by Khorshed M. Parvi

National Council of Educational
Research and Training, New Delhi

Pages 67, Rs. 2.10

VIROLOGY is a fast developing branch of biology, where new discoveries are almost the order of the day. It is not easy to present an idea of human knowledge on viruses and the battle that is on against them. As such, the efforts of Dr. Khorshed M. Parvi to put the material in the form of a children's story are indeed laudable.

Constant research is going on in many parts of the world to identify more viruses and study them so as to protect the human race from their attack. So far, more than 350 of them have been identified—of these, about 40 or so in India.

Vimla, the 12-year-old heroine of the book 'Vimla in Virusland', gets an attack of influenza. Her mother tells her that the disease is caused by viruses which are, perhaps, the tiniest living organisms, much, much smaller than a bacterium. The size of the viruses is measured in nanometres (nm), a nanometre being one millionth of a millimetre. Viruses cannot be seen even under the highest power of an ordinary microscope. Scientists have, however, invented a special microscope called the 'electron microscope' for finding them.

In the night, as Vimla falls asleep, the influenza virus, whom she later christens 'INF', takes her for a journey through the Virusland. Vimla meets many of the relatives of INF, the viruses causing, among other things, rabies, measles, mumps, dengue fever, polio, and cancer. She learns about their habits, their 'natural cycle', and 'incubation period'.

The viruses cause us illness all right, but they do a favour, too. When they leave us after an attack, they generally give the vic-

tims a sort of immunity against the disease. That is, the victim will not get the same disease again for a long time, and often never again in life.

Vimla also learns from her uncle, Ravi, who is a doctor, how vaccines are prepared and injected to prevent the attack of viruses. Unfortunately, so far there is no effective curative drug for the virus diseases, like penicillin for the bacterial attacks.

Vimla's Virusland may not be as interesting as Alice's Worderland, but it gives a lot of information. The facade of the story helps to sustain the reader's interest in the book. The book also gives some illustrations to make points lucid. But one felt that the many rhymes could have been left unattempted. Yet one wonders whether things like, "the constant play and interplay between all living things, each playing its own game but always trying to keep the balance of nature," were not better left untouched in a book for children.

While reading through the book, one recalls a similar book entitled 'Doctor's Tales' brought out by the Children's Book Trust, perhaps, a pioneering work in the field. 'Doctor's Tales' presents essential knowledge about some common diseases, like tetanus, malaria, and tuberculosis. In that book, the background story has been utilised in a better and more effective way.

The book, second in a series to be published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), deals with viruses of man and animals. The first one was a title on plant viruses.

The cover of a story is indeed attractive for such a book, but sometimes, it transcends even logics. For example, Vimla, during her tour, comes across some mosquitoes and arthropods and then realises that she does not know what an arthropod is!

Pillai



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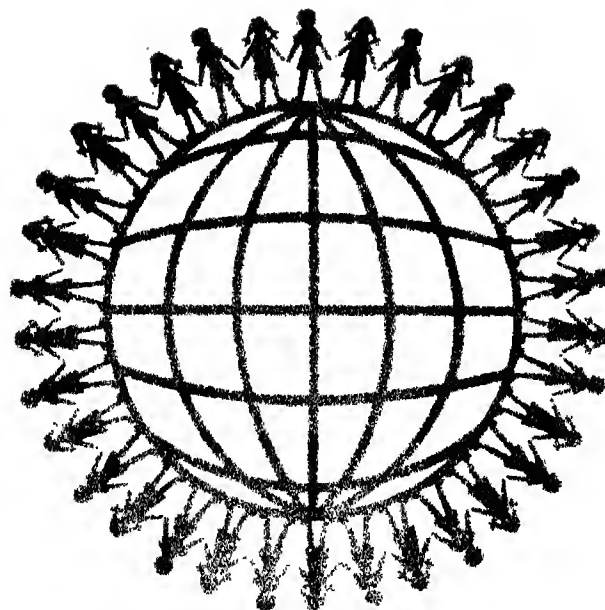
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**Editor
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**Assistant Editor
K. RAMAKRISHNAN**



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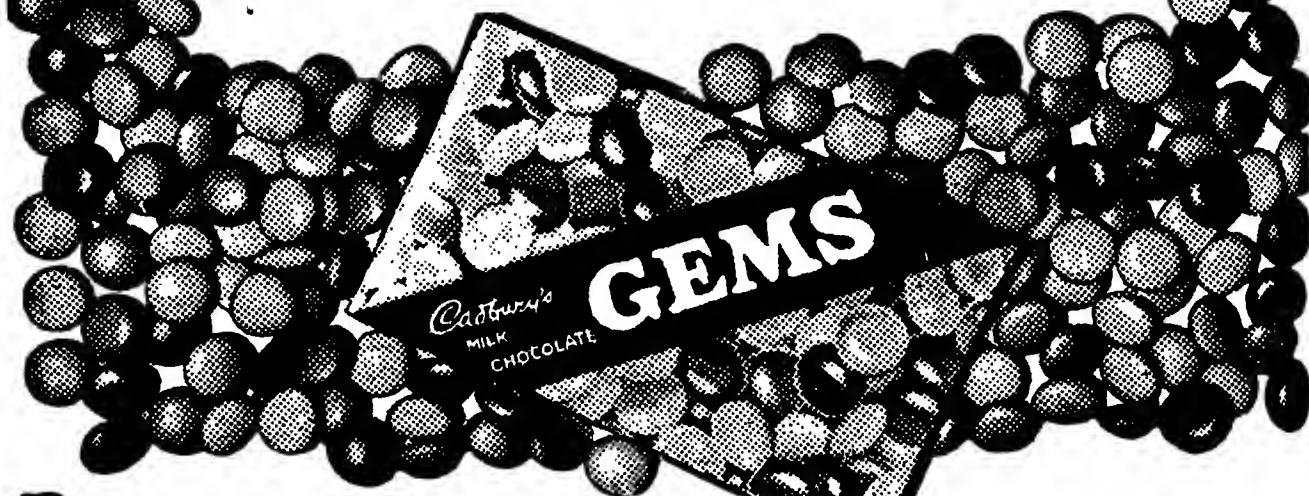
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5. Entries should reach the above address on or before August 31, 1977.
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9. A Competitor may submit only ONE Painting and/or essay.
10. The Jury's decision will be final.
11. The names of the Prizewinners will be announced in the NOVEMBER 1977 issue of this magazine, and the prize distribution is likely to be held in New Delhi in November 1977.
12. PRIZES:
There will be a First, Second and Third prize each for the three age groups 8-10, 11-13, 14-16. Prizes will be in the form of reproduction of well-known paintings, books, and dolls. There will also be several consolation prizes.
13. No competitor will be awarded more than ONE Prize.
14. The copyright of all entries will rest with the CHILDREN'S WORLD.

CLOSING DATE : AUGUST 31, 1977

Me and My Chair

ONE DAY, I had strayed into the store-room and was going through various items big and small, light and heavy, old and not so old, useful and useless, moth-eaten and dustladen, acquired and partially discarded during the past two decades of our stay in Delhi, but prized somehow or other, when I came upon the broken seat of an old chair, shrouded in dust.

I had much of a sentimental attachment for this ugly, wornout, square wooden seat, which was part of a tubular chair. Though lifeless and worthless, it was powerful enough to kindle the memories and reminiscences of a pleasant, innocent, and contented childhood. Happiness and joy around—and the days were as bright and beautiful as the fascinating colours of the rainbow. Plenty of love and affection, and complete absence of worries and cares. That is the bliss of childhood!

The chair, of which this seat was a separable part, formed an inseparable part of my younger days. From the day Dad brought this chair and its twin brother for me and my sister, they had served us as dining chairs, study chairs, aeroplanes, rocking horses, chariots...in fact a platform for our endless activities and adventures.

Against the kaleidoscope of the tarnished seat, into which a few strips of cane were woven horizontally and vertically, I painted the picture of my "taxi-rides downtown". I was about six years old and Meera just four. For us, the four corners of the drawing room formed the tourist spots of Delhi. If the north corner represented the Red Fort, the south stood for the Qutb Minar; the east would be Okhla, and the west Birla Mandir. While one of us became the 'passenger' and sat on the chair, the other, the 'driver', would push the chair to the 'destination'. We took turns for these thrilling joy-rides, with periodic scuffles amongst us for the seat.

Once, while taking me to the Red Fort, the legs of the chair tilted backwards. Meera

got scared. She could not take her hands off the chair, lest I fell down, nor would she straighten the chair with her fingers. Unlike the roads, where there is a chance of one in a thousand of passersby coming to the aid of an accident victim, our only chance of rescue was mother. I, the skinny six-year-old kid, bleated an SOS as loud as I could to my mother, who rushed to the scene of accident. She straightened the chair, and chided us for the joy-ride sessions.

I then remembered the pathetic picture of Uncle Menon, with his voluminous figure between the blue steel frames when the seat gave way. Mr. Menon, a close family friend, was an adorable person, whose company we utterly enjoyed. We loved him all the more perhaps for the sweets and toys he used to bring for us.

That evening he was to leave for Kerala for his marriage. He was comfortably seated, getting ready for a shave, when the seat gave way. With his face covered with froth and foam patterns, Mr. Menon looked every inch a pre-historic animal. The seat was dangling happily from the frame.

When the whole thing happened, Meera and I were in the kitchen, munching biscuits. It was the sudden thud and the pathetic 'aiyyo' that brought us to the scene. We now remembered our efforts the previous day to screw and unscrew the seat from the steel frame. Though it had been easy to remove the seat, we could hardly screw it back in its original place. It appeared that the screws, which gave strength to the chair, disliked the idea of being confined to the dark screw-holes. And thus the "CRASH".

We were now biting our nails nervously, scared as to when the cat would be out of the bag, with the inevitable punishment. Strangely, we were not suspected, and luckily we escaped Dad's wrath. A wide-eyed Meera asked me if God would not turn us both into devils and pack us up to hell for committing a sin and not admitting it.

Usha Gopinathan

CATTENBORG

A LONG time ago, a poor woodcutter and his wife lived in a little hut at the edge of a forest. Their only possessions in life were their son and daughter, a cow, and a cat. The woodcutter and his wife were always fighting. If he wanted one thing, she wished for another.

One day, the woman decided that she would make a nice pudding for dinner. And she thought that as her husband was always the first to start a fight, he could be expected to grumble that the pudding tasted awful!

The woodcutter had by chance decided that at the dinner table that night, he would eat whatever was served without uttering a word. He was sure that his wife would still start a fight! And the woodcutter found the pudding so delicious that he went to the kitchen to see if there was anymore left in the saucepan. When his wife saw what he was up to, she snatched the saucepan from him and ran out shouting, "I made the pudding, and I should at least get some to taste." He was angry with her and, seizing a ladle, started chasing her.

Their two children watched them running away, one with a saucepan and the other with a ladle. They waited the whole night for them to return and the whole of the next day and a few days more, but there was no sign of them. The brother then told his sister, "We will stay here for the rest of our lives if we are to wait for father and mother. If you agree, we will share what there is in the house and set out in the world to seek our fortunes."

"But we have nothing to share except the cow and the cat," the sister replied.

"Then, I'll take the cow and you take the cat," the brother decided at once.

The girl was about to protest against this unfair division when, suddenly, she felt a tug at her skirt and heard a voice saying,

"Please take me with you. You'll never regret your choice, I promise." She looked down and saw the cat giving her a pleading look. She picked him up at once and hugged him. Turning to her brother she said, "Yes, you may keep the cow and I'll take the cat." Without giving her a chance to regret her choice, the brother took the cow and went away.

The girl went indoors with the cat, whom she called Puss. She wondered what she would do for a living. Puss seemed to understand the girl's thoughts, for he said, "If you do exactly what I say, you'll never be unhappy."

The girl promised to do whatever she was told. "Let's start at once," Puss said. "We'll take the narrow path through the forest and not the high road your brother took." And they went into the forest. The girl walked along timidly behind the cat, and she jumped every time she heard eerie sounds. She was awfully scared of the dark, and the forest grew dense as they walked on. Besides, she had heard of the horrible trolls who lived in the forest. When she was too tired and could not walk any further, Puss said they could rest for some time. Anyway, they were nearly at the outskirts of the forest.

Wasn't the girl surprised when Puss asked her to take off all her clothes except her petticoat? But, since he had told her that she must obey him to gain happiness, she did as she was told. Puss tore her dress into rags and spread them all over the ground. When the girl asked him why he had done so, he told her she should trust him and not ask questions. Then he asked her to hide in a tree while he went to a royal castle just beyond the forest. The girl was quite scared of being alone, but she had faith in Puss.

Puss, in the meanwhile, went to the castle and narrated a sorrowful story, how he

was the only surviving attendant of a princess who had been attacked by a gang of robbers. All the others had been killed and dragged away. Luckily, she had escaped their clutches and climbed up a tree where she was still hiding. The princess had been robbed of all her fine jewellery and clothes.

The king of the castle was very upset to hear all this. Especially as it had all happened in his kingdom. He asked his son to go at once and investigate and also to escort the princess to their castle. The finest of jewellery and clothes were taken along, so that she could arrive at the castle like a true princess.

When the prince and his retinue reached the forest with Puss, they found everything exactly as it had been described by Puss. The whole area looked as though a violent fight had taken place. None of the princess's royal guards was in sight. And perched upon the tree, scared and weary, was the 'princess'. The prince found her the loveliest lady he had ever seen in his life and, from that very moment, he fell in love with her. She was soon brought down by his men and was dressed in a beautiful silk gown. The prince then helped her into a grand coach, which had been sent to fetch her.

The poor woodcutter's daughter thought that this was all a dream. But hadn't Puss said that she must have faith in him? Then

she would never be unhappy. The clever Puss even told her how to behave in front of the queen. If she couldn't find a prompt reply, she was to say, "It was very different at home in my beautiful castle Cattenborg."

The king was very impressed by her beauty and her manners. The queen also agreed that she was charming, but she had some doubts about her royal birth. The prince himself had declared to his parents



that this was the only girl he would marry. The queen, therefore, decided to find out the truth about the girl's royal blood. She sent her a magnificent gown, with a long train, to wear at dinner. 'If she is a real princess, she will know how to walk in it,' she thought.

Puss had guessed the crafty nature of the queen. So, he at once taught the girl how to walk gracefully in the gown. And, then, he hurried off to spy on the queen who, he was sure, would be up to some other mischief. He was just in time to overhear the queen instructing the Master of Ceremonies, "If she is a royal princess, she will know that the silver cups are used for the first course and the golden ones for the second." So Puss hurried back to his mistress to warn her. But he was too late. She had already left for the dining hall looking very beautiful in the gown and a golden crown, which the prince had given her as a gift. Except the queen, there wasn't anyone who doubted her royal birth.

She was escorted to the table by the prince and, when everyone was seated, the queen made a gesture that the wine should be tasted. She wanted to see what her lovely guest would pick up. Just as the girl was about to pick up the golden cup, she felt Puss rubbing against her leg. She knew he wanted to warn her that she had picked up the wrong cup. So she at once picked up the silver cup. The prince gave a triumphant look to his mother.

The queen was still not quite satisfied. If the girl were to marry her son, she had to make sure that she deserved him. So that night, before the princess went to bed, the queen went to the guest room and put a straw under the bed sheet. 'A true princess will notice it at once,' she mused. She left the room stealthily, not noticing Puss, who had seen her preparations. When his mistress was about to retire for the night, Puss told her what he had seen and he also taught her what she must say the next day.

During breakfast the next morning, when the queen asked the princess whether she had slept well, the girl replied, "I slept quite well as I was very tired. But I felt as though I had a tree under my sheet.

How different it was in my beautiful castle Cattenborg!"

All the queen's doubts disappeared with this reply. She was now certain that the princess was of royal birth. She gave her consent to her son marrying her. They were betrothed the next day and the prince asked the princess when they could go to her castle to get married. For this she had no reply.

One day, when they were sitting in the gardens, the princess saw a woman running with a saucepan in her hand and a man chasing her with a ladle. She couldn't help laughing at such a funny sight. When the prince asked what amused her so much, she replied, "I just thought how different it was at home in my beautiful castle Cattenborg!"

The prince got irritated. "You're always talking of your home," he said. "I think it is time we went there to get married."

The girl panicked on hearing this. As soon as she could escape, she ran in search of Puss. "Don't worry," Puss said calmly. "Trust me and you will be happy. You just go to the prince and ask him to make preparations to leave. He can start tomorrow if he likes." The girl was astonished at his calmness. But hadn't he always saved her?

Early next morning, the prince had horses and coaches fully equipped and ready for a long journey. In the royal coach sat the king and queen, the prince and his betrothed. In the other coaches were the other members of the royal family. It would take a few days to reach Cattenborg, Puss had said. And at night, they encamped by the roadside.

They were now approaching a region inhabited by trolls. There was one terrible troll who terrorized this region. Every night he used to rob and steal, and his huge castle was full of all the loot. The castle itself was magnificent. This troll was quite ordinary looking, with a long tail, a big nose, and sticking out ears. He was only five hundred years old—quite young compared to his other relatives who were nearly a thousand years old. He was afraid of only one thing and that was the sun. Like other evil things, the troll also could not stand daylight, for if he ever



looked at the sun, he would burst. So he always managed to get back to his castle before sunrise.

The clever Puss had found this out. When the others slept in the royal encampment, he ran all night and reached the golden castle of the troll. The castle had heavy oak doors and even the keyhole was golden. Puss turned himself into a bun and jumped into the keyhole and stayed put there.

It was early morning and the sky was beginning to turn golden. The troll hurried back to the castle with all his night's loot. The whole ground shook as he ran with the key in his hand. He was late that morning and he had to get inside fast. He pushed the golden key into the keyhole, but it got stuck. He tried again and again, but it wouldn't move. "Open the door!" he shouted. He suddenly heard a small voice say, "Just wait while I tell you my story. Then I'll open the door."

The troll was worried. "Open the door!" he knocked furiously.

"But first I must tell you my story," the voice said again. "At first I was kneaded till they could knead me to death. Then they floured me, till they could flour me to death. And then I was rolled out and put in the oven. And then I was....."

"Stop talking nonsense and open the door!" screamed the troll.

"But first you must listen to my story. I've not finished it," said the voice. The troll did not wait to hear. He kicked at the door furiously.

The bun remained silent for some time and said suddenly, "Turn round and see what a beautiful maiden is coming along the path."

The troll turned round only to face the sun, pouring rays all over him. He immediately fell on his back and a big bang was heard. The troll had burst.

The bun changed into a cat again and jumped down from the keyhole. He walked into the castle and told everyone that he had freed them from their evil master, and their new mistress, the beautiful princess, was soon coming. They were to make all preparations for her wedding. There

(Continued on page 41)

THE GOLD RING

“**A** MMA! Amma!” shrieked Rukmini.

Madhaviamma, who was cleaning sardines, threw down the fish and ran out into the courtyard, her knees trembling with anxiety. She heaved a sigh of relief when she saw that her 12-year-old daughter was safe, but her face became grave again with concern when she was told the reason for the girl's excitement.

Rukmini had dropped her gold ring in the well. It had slipped off her slender finger as she drew water from the well. The ring had come back from the goldsmith only that morning. It had been sent for polishing along with other ornaments. Rukmini had been fascinated by it and, like other vain little girls, had wanted to try it on her pretty fingers. But her mother had objected to it strongly; Rukmini had been disobedient and when her mother wasn't there, she had quietly slipped it on her finger. She had only meant to keep it on for a little while and would have returned it to her mother later. But Rukmini had not then learnt that everything does not always work out according to one's plans. If she had foreseen this unfortunate incident, she would never have even touched the ring.

She now hung her head in shame and wept bitterly, while the other members of the family stood around her accusingly.

It was impossible to recover the ring rightaway, because the well still had plenty of water. Madhaviamma waited till the summer had set in and the well had almost become dry. She then sent for Raghavan.

It was Raghavan who did all the odd jobs in the village. Whenever the women-folk wanted the coconuts plucked, Raghavan was summoned. As swiftly as a monkey, he would shin up the coconut palms. Now, equally skilfully, he lowered himself into the well.

His task was not an easy one. He spent the whole morning sending up buckets full of wet sand and slush from the well. These were dumped by the side of the well, forming little pyramids. He then spent the afternoon rummaging through all the heaps. It was almost evening and Raghavan had given up hope of recovering the ring when, suddenly, his fingers caught something hard and cold. Raghavan's heart was thumping wildly as he slowly withdrew his hand from the sand. He opened his palm and there lay the ring covered with sand, the gold struggling to shine through all that grime.

He was about to shout out in glee when a thought occurred to him. He looked around furtively. Nobody was in sight. Why should he hand over the ring? He could very well say he did not find the ring. Who would know the truth? Madhaviamma would at the most pay him five rupees for his labour. But if he sold the ring to a jeweller, it might fetch him a hundred times that amount. Greed overcame Raghavan. He told Madhaviamma a lie and left the house, with the ring carefully hidden in the waist of his lungi.

But Raghavan was not a happy boy that evening. Madhaviamma's disappointed face kept haunting him, and the thought of the ring in his possession was like a thorn constantly pricking him. He did not have the heart to join his friends at the village teashop. Instead, he returned to his little room and sat alone in the dark. He did not bother to light the solitary lantern that hung from the ceiling. He shied away from all light and welcomed darkness which, he felt, was a cover for his dishonest deed. For the first time in his life, Raghavan spent a sleepless night, tossing about uneasily.

By morning he could bear it no longer and decided he would immediately go and return the ring. But would it be a wise

action? he wondered. News would spread around the village and he would be called a thief. Would the people call him again, after this, to do their odd jobs? How would he earn a living? These thoughts disturbed him. It needs a lifetime to build one's reputation, but it takes only a single second to destroy it! Suddenly, an idea struck him and he chuckled to himself with relief.

Madhaviamma was surprised to find Raghavan at the door early in the morning. "Amma," he said, "I have come to search for the ring again. All night I've been thinking; it has to be here. Where else could it go?"

Madhaviamma did not appear to be excited over the suggestion, but gave him permission to go ahead.

Raghavan ran to the heaps of sand and began clawing at it feverishly. He wondered how soon he could announce the discovery of the ring. Not too soon. Or it might arouse suspicion. He waited till it neared midday and the sun's heat had begun

to scorch his back before he let out a cry of happiness.

"Amma! Amma! I've found it," he shouted.

There was a lot of excitement inside the house. Rukmini ran out, her face beaming with joy. Madhaviamma hurried in to lay out a banana leaf and some 'payasam' for Raghavan. But, when she came out, there was no sign of Raghavan! He had quietly slipped away. The joy he saw all around him and the intense relief he felt was reward enough for him.

Sheila Saha

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A GRAIN OF SAND

I AM a grain of sand. I am in a lump of sand near the seaside. I am more than one-millionth part of a sand castle which the children on the beach built. When the waves destroy the castle, they build once again. But I am surprised that I am always a part of the sand castle. I am a molecule of the castle. A strong wave is coming, but why is everyone running away? It is a flood, and now it is taking me far, far away from the beach. It is a very bad wave. It is breaking houses and killing everyone.

"You should kill a small thing and then big. Try to destroy me," I said.

"You! Ha, Ha, Ha," the wave laughed.

"Just try," I said to the wave. The wave tried to destroy me, but I was too small. When she was defeated, I said, "I am greater than you. Listen to me, go back to the place from where you came."

After some days, strange types of machines came, which removed rocks and sand. They put me in something with rocks and sand accompanied by me. I was mixed with cement to build a house. Lying here like a prisoner, I remember my freedom when I used to enjoy running on the beach and bathe in the waves of the sea.

*Apurva Singh (9)
India*



THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING BOY



THE STORY SO FAR

PRAKASH Tandon, has younger sister Vinita, and their friend Avi are on their way to Mr. Mullick's shop to buy a present for Avi's younger sister, Tinu. It is her sixth birthday. In the park opposite the market, 'Kash' notices strange men. He wants to 'investigate'. But they have no time, so they go straight to Mullick's. A big built man is seen talking to Mr. Mullick. He keeps quiet as soon as they enter. The children ask for a Hulla-Hoop Girl and Mr. Mullick gets one from the back-store neatly wrapped. In his hurry, he knocks against a crate, making a deep scratch on his shoe. The children rush home with the parcel. Along with Mrs. Tandon, they all go for the party.

When Tinu opens her gifts, she finds a Hulla-Hoop Girl from the Shuklas. Her cousin, Seema, cries for it and Avi gives her the duplicate one from Prakash and Vini. Seema takes the unopened box and runs to her room. Tinu plays with her toy, till it breaks and can dance no more.

The next morning, it is in the papers that Mr. Mullick's shop had been raided for diamonds, but that nothing had been

found. Prakash and Vini run to Avi with the news.

Avi, too, has news. Overnight Tinu's broken Hulla-Hoop Girl has been replaced with a new one. It must be Seema's mother, Aunt Nandini, who has replaced it, they decide.

Then, Inspector Bhalla telephones to enquire about the toy they bought at Mullick's. Avi tells him all about it and that it was with them still. The Inspector calls him 'silly' and disconnects the phone!

A phone call to Aunt Nandini discloses that she hadn't replaced the toy, and that Seema's parcel in fact contained a Rock-n-Roll Boy! Is this why the Inspector had called Avi silly? Avi telephones him to tell him the latest news and finds that it wasn't the Inspector who had rung up earlier!

The children are thoroughly confused and decide to go outside to figure things out. Then suddenly they stop. They see Prakash standing as though transfixed, his face as white as marble!

Now read on....

6. NEW PLAN

AVI looked in the direction that Prakash was looking. He was shocked to find one of the frosted glass-panes in the window broken. Through it the sun entered the drawing room, falling in a bright patch on the red carpet. "Is it the broken glass?" he asked.

Prakash nodded his head, and slowly moved towards the window.

"Well," he said, while trying to open the window. Then he seemed to have changed his mind and withdrew his hands. "Let's not touch or disturb anything. The police might need all the clues. Fingerprints and all that."

"Police! Fingerprints! What're you talking about?" Vinita's eyes widened in amazement. "Just a broken windowpane and

you're already talking about the police."

"No, Vini," said Avi, looking more carefully at the broken pane. "It's not only the broken glass. Look up there. See those tapes? They were never there before."

"I've read somewhere," said Prakash, "that such tapes are used to break glass without any noise."

Vinita was now even more confused. "But why should anybody want to break a windowpane without noise? Only a thief would do it, isn't it?" she said and suddenly turned white. Her voice was choked. "Do you mean some thief had tried to break in?"

"Not just tried," said Prakash. "He actually got in. Look at the bolt. It's open. The window is just shut, not bolted."

"My god!" said Avi. "I hadn't noticed that. I now remember, I had bolted all the



windows myself last night. Mom asked me to, as she went to her bedroom. And I had fastened the lower bolt as the one above was a little too high for me."

"And that's where the glass is broken. Near the lower bolt," Prakash pointed out.

"We should tell aunty about it and call the police at once," said Vinita.

"Wait, let's make sure we aren't making fools of ourselves," said Prakash, while making his way outside.

He went up to the window, Avi and Vinita following him. Broken pieces of glass lay on the cemented pavement. They had stains and there were a number of brown spots on the pavement near the window.

"It's blood," said Prakash. "Looks as though the thief cut his hand on the sharp edges." His voice was now almost a murmur as if he was speaking to himself. "Trying to open the bolt through that broken pane was risky, indeed, with that jagged edge."

Forgetting the presence of Avi and Vinita, he started walking back into the drawing room. He moved about near the window, trying to look for something.

"Oh, there's a drop of blood on the floor, too," he said. Then, suddenly, he crouched on the carpet and looked at something closely, and touched it with his forefinger. "My god! the red carpet deceived us. There's blood on it, too."

Avi and Vinita joined him and looked at the brown spot on the carpet. "Yes," Avi agreed in a whisper.

They shuffled about on the carpet on their knees trying to see if there were more spots on it.

"Here's one more," Vinita announced as if she had won a competition.

"And a third one here," said Avi.

"Let's see who gets the fourth. Oh, here, I've got it already!" Vinita declared.

Prakash noticed that the spots were trailing towards the dining table. Though the carpet ran up to the wall, there were no spots beyond the dining table.

"That means," said Avi, getting up from

the carpet, "the thief was interested in something on the dining table."

"There you are," said Prakash with admiration, "you're warming up now. That's the first intelligent thing you've said so far."

Vinita's voice was almost a whisper. "But, what can a thief want from the dining table, unless he was starving?"

"Don't be silly," said Prakash. "Nobody would break in just to get a few crumbs of food." He looked at the table-top. It was absolutely clean.

Avi saw Prakash looking at the table and immediately guessed what he had in mind. "There might have been some spots on the table, too," he said. "But Chhotu must have cleaned everything. And, you know, how he works with his eyes closed! He won't notice anything."

"Even if he had, he wouldn't have recognised them. He would've thought it was tomato sauce, or something," said Prakash and everyone burst into laughter. Prakash continued. "The big question now is, what was on this table that interested the thief?"

They all sat down on the sofa pondering over the problem.

"I'm afraid," said Prakash, "we've reached a dead end. Let's go and tell aunty now. She may like to call the police."

The three of them went to Mrs. Tayal and told her all about it. She was very nervous on hearing about it. "Do you mean a thief had broken into the house?" she said unbelievably.

"Yes, aunty," Prakash replied. "But I don't think he stole anything valuable."

Mrs. Tayal did not seem to have heard him. She was frantically checking up things. When she was certain that nothing had been stolen from the house, she was suddenly very angry. "You three are imagining things. Why would the thief break in if he didn't steal anything?"

"But, aunty," Prakash tried to explain. "There's the broken glass pane, open bolt, and drops of blood. Don't you think the police should be informed?"

Mrs. Tayal was thoroughly confused. She didn't know what to do. Then, suddenly, she remembered that Inspector Bhalla was known to them. "What's Uncle Bhalla's number, Avi?" she asked.

He gave her the number and Mrs. Tayal dialled with nervous fingers and spoke into the phone even before the receiver was picked up at the other end. She realised her mistake when there was no reply.

Soon she heard, "Inspector Bhalla here."

"Oh, Mr. Bhalla," Mrs. Tayal spoke in a shaky voice, "I am Mrs. Tayal. There's been a theft in my house. No, not exactly a theft; in fact, nothing seems to have been stolen. But someone broke in last night."

The Inspector immediately sensed her nervousness. He calmed her down immediately with a pleasant and reassuring laugh. "Well, Mrs. Tayal, if nothing's been stolen, then why worry? Just tell me what has happened."

Mrs. Tayal felt much better all at once and gave Mr. Bhalla some of the details.

"Well, I'm glad it's nothing serious," the Inspector said. "I'm extremely busy right now. But I'll send my Sub-Inspector Digvijay Singh. He is quite clever."

Sub-Inspector Digvijay Singh arrived with a couple of constables in about fifteen minutes. They inspected the place, examined various things, and asked many questions. In the end he said, "The thief did break in, but he came only upto the dining table and went back."

The children were very proud of themselves. Their conclusions had been very correct.

"What was there on the dining table, Mrs. Tayal, that a thief could have been interested in?" the Sub-Inspector asked.

"Nothing that I can think of," she said. "Moreover, nothing seems to be missing."

Much to the curiosity of the children, the Sub-Inspector obtained fingerprints and with a piece of blade scraped some dry blood from the glass pane.

When the police left, Vinita said admiringly, "That's great, Kash! You said they

would be interested in fingerprints. There! Our great Sherlock Holmes. No, Kashlock Holmes!" And she raised her hand in a mock salute.

Just then the phone rang. Avi attended to it. "It's for you, Prakash. Uncle there."

"Prakash," said his father, Mr. Tandon. "I'm going away to Meerut. I'll be back late, maybe ten in the night. Just remain at home, and don't worry. Both of you may go to sleep."

"Okay, dad," said Prakash. He was quite used to Mr. Tandon's ways of working.

As soon as he replaced the receiver, the phone started ringing again.

"Yes?" Prakash picked up the phone again and spoke.

"Avi, Inspector Bhalla again," the voice said. "You told me your aunty had taken a Hulla-Hoop Girl with her to Meerut. What's her address there?"

Prakash kept mum for several moments. He was trying to straighten things in his mind. 'Avi has already told the Inspector that what aunty Nandini had taken is only a Rock-n-Roll Boy and not a Hulla-Hoop Girl. Is it really the Inspector calling again?' he wondered.

"Hello!" the voice said.

"Yes?" Prakash said, mechanically.

"I asked, what's your aunty's address at Meerut?" The voice appeared rather irritated.

In the meantime Prakash had made some guesses. "17, Nehru Road," he blurted into the mouthpiece.

Avi and Vinita noticed the changing expressions on Prakash's face. There was something strange going on, they could tell from his face.

"To whom did you give Uncle Mathur's address, Prakash?" Vinita asked, as he put back the receiver.

"To Uncle Bhalla," he replied, smiling. Then he started dialling his father's number.

"Daddy, can Vini, Avi and I go with you to Meerut? It'll be an outing for us. We can call on Tara and Bobby. We haven't

met them for a long time," Prakash said and waited impatiently, hoping his father wouldn't say no.

His father's voice came after a moment. "There's no question of my waiting there in the car while the three of you dilly-dally. So get ready fast. I'll be home in ten minutes," said Mr. Trandon and disconnected.

"Hurry up, both of you," Prakash cried happily.

"What's it all about?" Avi asked, not understanding anything. "What's the rush?" "Look here," said Prakash, "we've just ten minutes. Five minutes to change our clothes and five minutes to talk and plan. There's no time for anything else."

And he caught hold of Vini's arm and tore through the door towards his house. While Vini got ready, Prakash said, "I'm coming in a minute," and scampered back to Avi's house. Avi was putting on his shoes.

"Look here, Avi," said Prakash. "I've thought of a new plan. I'll tell you about it later. But we'll need a Hulla-Hoop Girl and there's no time to go and get a new one."

"We can take Tinu's," Avi said getting up.

"I was thinking of that myself," said Prakash. "But wouldn't she miss it and raise hell? And aunty might object, too."

"Don't be silly," said Avi turning towards the bedroom. "Tinu has plenty of new toys. She wouldn't have much time for the Girl. And Mummy doesn't mind such things."

"Okay, then," said Prakash happily, "wrap it up in a newspaper. Quick."

Avi went in and almost immediately was out with the toy all wrapped up.

They rushed back and found that Vini was ready, too.

"What's there in that packet?" she asked them.

"A present for Inspector Bhalla!" said Prakash, and he and Avi laughed together.

"Tell me about it, Avi, please," said Vini crossly.

"The funniest part is I don't know anything myself!" Avi said.

"Now, let's do some talking," Prakash said hurriedly. "I'll tell you what's in my

mind."

Suddenly, they heard the familiar horn. "That's daddy," said Prakash. "My god, we've no time to talk. I promised him that he won't have to wait," he said as he pushed Vini ahead of him.

Sudha Goel

(To be continued)





FENRIS AND THE GODS

ODIN, the king of gods, had two ravens that sat on his shoulders. One was called Hugin (Thought) and the other Munin (Memory). Every day they flew to the world and brought him news of all that happened there.

One day, the two ravens flew back to Odin in distress. "There are three monsters living in a cave," they informed him. "One of them is a strong wolf called Fenris; the second one is Hel, a giantess with a patchy, black-and-white skin; and the third is a snake, the longest we have ever seen."

Odin was worried. "They might harm the weak human beings," he thought. He rode on his horse, Sleipnir, and galloped away, past the rainbow bridge which joined heaven to earth, and went down to the cave. He was shocked to see the terrible creatures. "This cave is too small to hold you all," he

said, "so I will send you elsewhere. Hel, I make you the queen of the land in the centre of the earth, and you, snake, you're to be the king of the sea."

"You have forgotten me!" growled Fenris the wolf.

"I will take you with me to Asgard, the palace in heaven," said Odin.

And that was how Fenris came to Asgard. The gods wanted to tame him, and so they were kind to him. They played with him, and he was fed by the goddesses. No beast was as fortunate as Fenris. But he became more and more ferocious with the passage of time and grew so huge that the gods were alarmed. The ravens brought disturbing news: "Fenris's brother, the snake, has grown so gigantic that he can coil round the world!"

"And Fenris is bigger than a horse," observed Frigga, the queen of gods.

"Since he cannot be tamed, he must be bound," the gods decided.

Fenris was so savage that he could not be bound forcibly and the gods, therefore, thought of a trick. They had a chain made by Mimir, the divine smith. It was the strongest he had ever made. The gods went with it to Fenris. "You are always boasting of your strength; prove it now," they said. Fenris nodded his shaggy head. The gods fastened the chain around his body. "Now snap it!" they cried. Fenris broke it in two in a trice.

The gods brought another chain, much stronger than the previous one, but Fenris broke that, too, as easily as before. The gods watched uneasily while the wolf howled with laughter. His double victory made Fenris all the more wild. At last, the gods could bear it no more. They went to Odin and told him all that had happened. The king of gods was troubled. He thought awhile and then sent for the dwarfs, who were great magicians. "Make me a chain, as strong as you can," he ordered.



The king of dwarfs bowed low. "It will be done," he said.

The dwarfs came back with the chain after a long time. It was as thin as a silken cord and was made of many strange things—the saliva of birds, the roots of a big mountain, the desires of a bear, the sound of a cat's footsteps, a woman's beard, and the voice of a fish. All these rare ingredients took the dwarfs a long time to make the chain.

When Fenris saw the chain, he was puzzled. He grew suspicious when he looked at the gods—brightfaced with hope. 'It is a magic chain!' he guessed. The cunning wolf remained silent for a minute. Then, in a voice as sweet as honey, he said, "I will allow you to test my strength on one condition."

"Yes?" asked the gods, eagerly.

"One of you must put his right hand in my mouth," said the wolf.

The gods were horrified. Each one of them was a valiant warrior—and to lose his right hand was worse than losing his life. Not even the mighty Thor, the god of Thunder and the most powerful son of Odin, dared to move forward. 'So the wolf will remain free after all,' thought the gods sadly. Just then Tyr, the god of War, went to the wolf. He remained calm when the wolf took his right hand between his sharp fangs. The gods then tied the magic chain around Fenris.

"Set yourself free!" cried Tyr.

Fenris strained his muscles, but the chain remained unbroken. He broke several bones of his huge body, still the chain was around him. With a howl of rage and disappointment, he bit through Tyr's right hand. The bleeding hand was crippled forever.

"Alas!" wailed the gods and goddesses, "the god of War will wield the sword no more!"

Tyr smiled and said, "I have made the gods and men safe. No sacrifice is too great for that."

Deeply moved, Odin blessed his son.

Sujaya Sen

FAMOUS ECCENTRICS-2



BEAUTIFUL and brave Lady Hester Stanhope (1776-1839), daughter of an English nobleman and niece of the statesman, William Pitt the Younger, was a glorious eccentric! She grew up in a great mansion and died in poverty in a Lebanese monastery.

She showed her spirit even as a girl. On holiday at the British seaside once, full of romantic ideas of life abroad, she stole a boat and started rowing to France. She did not get far; a pursuing party in a fishing boat rapidly overtook her.

It was her self-will and independence that set her off on her wanderings. Her father, Lord Stanhope, himself an eccentric — he renounced his title and called himself 'Citizen Stanhope' — gave her menial tasks. She then ran away to her grandmother.

A few years later, this tall, fascinating young woman became a sensation in London society and high politics, as mistress of her uncle, Prime Minister Pitt's household. She broke more than one heart as she moved about in the limelight, which she loved.



AFTER the death of Pitt, she became virtually homeless. Lady Stanhope left Britain in 1810 on a fabulous journey to the east from which she never returned. With her on a frigate was her own doctor, C.L. Meryon. Typically, she gloried in a great storm.

Her journeys on land were like pageant scenes. She rode on horseback at the head of a fantastic retinue of liveried servants. Ever in attendance was the faithful Meryon and young Michael Bruce, with whom she had fallen in love, in Malta.

Lady Stanhope soon became a legend. She was carried into Constantinople (now Istanbul), the Turkish capital, in a sedan chair. When the Sultan rode in the streets, everyone bowed, but she sat erect on her horse. She did not mean any disrespect; it was just her way!

In 1811, when her party sailed for Egypt, their ship ran into a storm and, taking in water, heeled over. She helped in the vain bid at bailing out. They then took to the boats. After hours of rowing, they were flung up on the island of Rhodes.

HESTER STANHOPE



LADY STANHOPE adopted eastern male costume, of gold embroidered pantaloons, waistcoat, and turban. In this guise, she continued her romantic progress. She always kept attention on herself, riding at the head of her procession.

In the Syrian mountains, her encamped party was attacked by robbers led by the notorious Abu Ghouse. But so overcome was he by Lady Stanhope's imperious dignity that, instead of plundering her caravan, he spread a feast before her!

Abu Ghouse himself kept guard outside her tent and insisted on escorting the 'princess', as she had come to be known, over difficult stretches of the country. She had only to say where she wanted to go; he would take her there.

Her fame spread before her. She made a sort of triumphant entry into Damascus, after being received by the Pasha. She demanded — and got — a palace to stay in. As she rode through the streets, crowds followed her crying, "There goes the queen!"



LADY STANHOPE now set herself the goal of reaching the ancient, fabulous city of Palmyra, the ruined temples and columns of which she saw in front of her after leading a 70-camel caravan on a long, dangerous and gruelling trek across the sands.

The inhabitants gave her a royal welcome. To the beating of drums and crack of firearms, they swept out to meet her. Girls danced about her in the streets and, finally, a supreme moment for her, she was 'crowned' with a wreath and hailed as 'queen'.

Her eccentricity only grew. She quarrelled with the British government, gave up the pension Pitt had got for her, and retired to an old Lebanese monastery she acquired. She smoked a long Turkish tobacco pipe. Meryon went home, but came back to her.

At heart, this astonishing, self-willed woman was kind. When famine came to the land, she fed starving people from her own pitiful stocks. She gave shelter to the refugees from a revolt. But the self-styled 'Nun of Lebanon' died alone.

(Courtesy: BIS)

TREKKING

"NO, not that way, Ronald; let's take this path," Sony called out to his brother as they neared the thick mountain forest.

"Ronald, we shouldn't go far; we've no idea of the place," Sony shouted again, as he followed his brother.

"Don't worry, boy! You're always panicky," said Ronald.

"But we came to the Island only yesterday," Sony persisted.

"So what?" Ronald appeared to be really irritated.

"Let's then put some marks on the trees as we walk," Sony suggested.

"That's a good idea," Ronald agreed.

Both boys took out their scouting knives and started carving out signs on trees while climbing the mountain.

"Oh, it is 12 already, Ronald. Mummy must be worrying about us. Let's go back."

"Listen, there comes a plane; can you hear it?"

"It must be a spray plane from the plantations."

Suddenly, there was a sound of an explosion.

"What could that be?" wondered Ronald.

"My head is reeling," cried Sony.

"Come on, let's take shelter."

They crouched themselves behind a thick bush nearby. There was a rustling sound all over.

"What could it be? Would it be a ghost, Ronald?"

"Keep quiet, boy. Ghosts! During daytime? Let's find the marks we made on the trees," said Ronald in a rather trembling voice.

There was lightning followed by a heavy downpour.

"We must wait till the rain stops."



"Past I now. Mom and Dad must be really worried."

"Let's look for the signs on the trees."

"That's funny, we're not able to find any!" said Ronald with some concern. "I think we should go up the hill; we may see the path."

Ronald and Sony started to climb the steep hillside holding on to one tree after another.

"How long can we keep on climbing like this, Ronald?"

"What else can we do? We've to reach somewhere."

"That's why I was asking you to go back."

"It has started raining again; let's wait for a while."

They stood under a tree, wiping their faces every now and then.

As the rain slowed down to a drizzle, they resumed their climb.

"It appears there is no end to this dense forest."

"Shall we shout for help?"

Sony shouted loudly: "Is there anybody around? We want help. HELP!!"

He shouted again and again. Ronald joined him, but their voices only echoed and slowly faded away.

"I'm very tired and feeling little cold," said Sony.

"Let's take off our wet shirts and keep on walking."

"I'm tired, Ronald. Why should we climb further? Why shouldn't we start going down?"

"Why?"

"Do you remember, Ronald, Daddy once telling us about somebody who had lost his way in a jungle?"

"I don't remember."

"We should try to get near a stream, he had said, if ever we're lost."

"For what? To drink water? No. Let's make it to the top of the mountain; I don't want to lose the track."

"But we're already lost."

"What do you want me to do, boy?" said Ronald and halted in his way.

"Let's climb down the hill, and get to the valley, where we might see some rivulet."

"Oh, yes, now I remember Daddy's story.

Okay, let's climb down into the valley."

The sound of wind drifted through the stillness of the jungle. Sony was about to slip on a moss-covered stone.

"Be careful, boy."

"These wet shoes are hurting," Sony complained.

"Let's not think of anything, but keep on walking."

"There is the sound of water trickling. Can you hear, Ronald?"

They stood quiet for a while. "Oh, yes, it must be a rivulet."

"Look, Ronald! What's that? Isn't it smoke?"

"Something is burning. Yes, I can smell it."

"Then there must be people around; let's call them."

At the top of his voice, Ronald yelled: "Help! Anybody there?"

"No reply; perhaps it is just a jungle fire."

"But this is some horrible smell," said Ronald as they went on clearing the bushes and climbing down the hill.

"Something is lying here, Ronald!" Sony pointed out. He bent down and picked up a piece of metal painted yellow.

Ronald took it from him. "What could it be? I don't understand," he said, bewildered.

"Be quiet, Ronald. I heard someone groaning. It is coming from that side."

They walked to their left, cautiously cutting their way through the bushes.

"Look, there, a piece of red cloth!"

Then, "Ah... help!"

"There, someone is groaning!"

Ronald and Sony jumped over the bushes and reached there in a second. They found a woman lying with burns all over and groaning every now and then.

"What has happened to you, Madam?"

"Ah, boys, there was a plane crash a few minutes ago. I was one of the passengers. Oh! My arm is paining and I am caught in the bushes. Oh! these burns, they're hurting me!"

"Can we help you to get up and stand?"

"Try, if you can, boys."

Ronald and Sony helped her move away from the bushes. With great difficulty, they made her get up on her feet.

"You may rest your arms on our shoulders, and we would take you near the water."

They walked her. Sony's shoulders started aching as the woman leaned heavily on his side.

"I can't walk anymore, boys; leave me here," the woman moaned.

"Sony, you stay here. The stream is close by. Let me go and get some water," said Ronald as he hurried towards the rivulet.

"Just tie my arm to my neck with this scarf, Sony," the woman suggested.

Sony untied the green scarf from her neck, knotted it to make a sling, put it round her neck, and helped her injured arm into the loop.

Meanwhile, Ronald reached the stream. His father's words were now echoing in his ears. 'Reach the stream and walk along the flow, and you're always likely to see men.'

Ronald walked and walked with the flow. There were no bushes along the river and it was easier to walk there. He had only to jump over the stones.

After walking for a good distance, he came upon someone bathing in the river. Ronald rushed to him and quickly told him the whole story.

"Come, let's hurry to the police station."

He got into his clothes and they both rushed to the police station. There Ronald also telephoned "Island House", where his parents were staying, and quickly told his mother about the plane crash. "Don't worry, Mummy, I am with Mr. Butler, and we are rushing back to Sony."

He heard his mother break down with emotion. She just mumbled, "Okay."

"Don't worry, Mom, we will soon be there. We're just a few miles away from Island House," Ronald assured her.

"I shall be sending your Dad," she said after a pause.

Ronald left the phone and accompanied Mr. Butler and the rescue party.

When they reached the forest, they found

that Sony had already managed to take the woman to the stream.

"All the four persons on the plane are safe, except for their burns and other injuries," announced one of the policemen.

When Sony and Ronald got back to their home, they were dead tired.

"It was a long, long day, Sony."

"Oh, sure, Ronald."

Just then they heard the Island Radio:

"Here's the News read by Dorothy King. A 5-seater plane bound for Monserat from Dominica crashed in the forest this morning. Two boys, Ronald and Sony Mathews, aged 14 and 12, who were trekking in the mountain forest, informed the police, and all the four passengers, including one woman have been rescued. Though suffering from burn injuries and fractures, all four of them are out of danger....."

Ronald shook hands with Sony, and they exchanged smiles.

Weren't their parents proud of them?

Manorama Jafa

THE WORLD I LOVE

Pink and white blossoms hanging
Giving off a marvellous scent;
Sweet cherries glowing, warm and red,
Even picking them is fun!
Cold wet dew on the grass,
Shining in the morning light,
Moving in the gentle breeze,
Leaves fluttering and falling softly.
The rippling of water in garden pools,
Making strange reflections.
Tall wall-flowers standing by,
And yellow rose-bushes like kings.
The red-hot flames of our village forge
Light my whole world with their glow.

*Thomas Foster (10)
Britain*

KAPISH



ANANT PAI
MOHANDAS

KAPISH LIVED IN A CORNER OF THE
FOREST WITH HIS FATHER, NILRAJ
AND HIS MOTHER —



THEY WERE A HAPPY
FAMILY. ONE DAY —

I AM GOING TO VISIT
MY COUSIN AT THE
OTHER END OF THE
JUNGLE.



I WILL BE BACK BE-
FORE MID-DAY. KAPISH!
STAY CLOSE TO YOUR
MOTHER WHILE I HAVE
GONE.



COME BACK
SOON, FATHER.



THE JOURNEY WAS LONG.



I AM GETTING
OLD. I CAN HEAR
MY BONES
CREAKING.

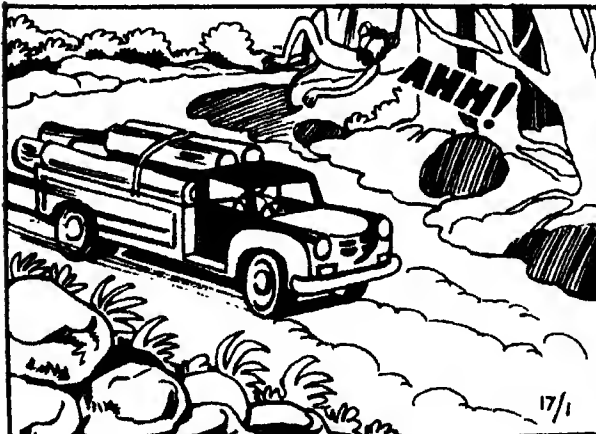
I'LL HOP ON TO THAT
MANGO TREE AND
REST FOR A WHILE



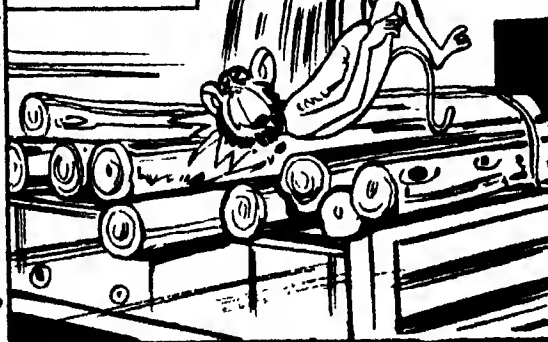
HE LUNGED FORWARD, BUT
HIS WEARY HANDS FAILED TO
GET A GRIP ON THE BRANCH —



I AM
FALLING!



IT SO HAPPENED THAT A TRUCK CARRYING
TIMBER WAS PASSING BELOW AT THAT
MOMENT ...



THE DRIVER OF THE TRUCK WAS UNAWARE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED. HE DROVE AWAY CARRYING HIS PASSENGER, WHO WAS NOW UNCONSCIOUS, WITH HIM.



MEANWHILE, IN THE JUNGLE—

WHERE HAS HE GONE? HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN BACK HOME BY NOW.

MOTHER, I'LL GO AND SEE WHAT HAS HAPPENED.



SO KAPISH WENT TO LOOK FOR HIS FATHER. HE WENT DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THE JUNGLE AND SOON —



IT'S KAPISH!

HE TOLD THEM WHY HE HAD COME —

YOU SAY NILRAJ SET OUT TO VISIT US?

BUT HE NEVER ARRIVED HERE!

KAPISH HAD A SHOCK. HE THOUGHT THAT SOMETHING TERRIBLE MUST HAVE HAPPENED TO HIS FATHER.



WE MUST FIND HIM AT ONCE! TELL EVERY-ONE TO START A SEARCH!

DON'T WORRY, KAPISH. EVERY-THING WILL BE ALL RIGHT.

THE MONKEYS SPREAD OUT TO SEARCH FOR NILRAJ. KAPISH TURNED ASIDE TO HIDE HIS TEARS AND TO MURMUR A PRAYER —

O LORD HANUMAN, PLEASE HELP ME.. FIND MY FATHER..



JUST THEN, THE GREAT EAGLE PANJA CAME HOVERING INTO VIEW —



KAPISH...

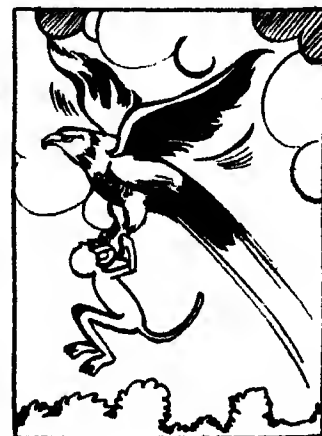
I SAW YOUR FATHER BEING CARRIED AWAY IN A TRUCK. HE SEEMED TO BE UNCONSCIOUS.



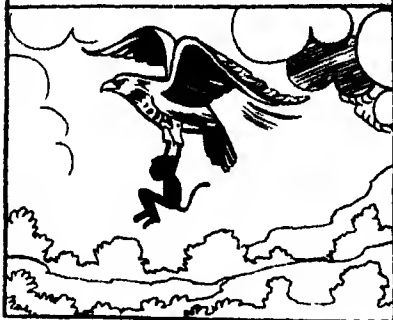
HOLD ON TO MY LEGS, AND I WILL FLY YOU OUT TO THE PLACE.



17/2



HIGHER AND HIGHER CLIMBED THE EAGLE, AND SOON THE JUNGLE WAS LEFT FAR BELOW.

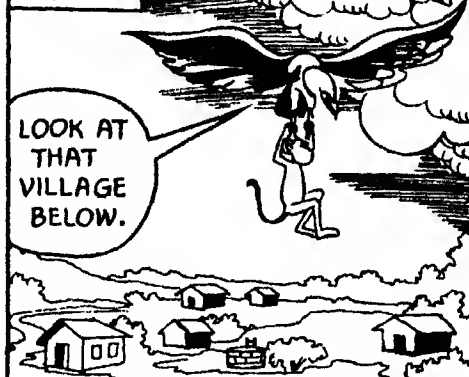


ARE YOU FRIGHTENED KAPISH?



NO, NO. I FEEL QUITE SAFE WITH YOU.

THEN —



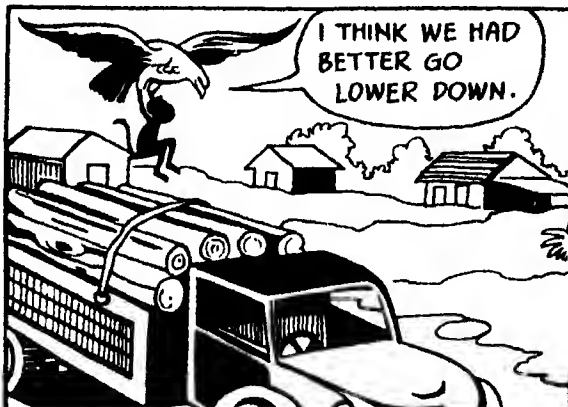
LOOK AT THAT VILLAGE BELOW.



I CAN SEE A TRUCK STANDING THERE. IT IS CARRYING WOOD.



IT IS THE SAME TRUCK. BUT I CAN'T SEE YOUR FATHER ANYWHERE.



I THINK WE HAD BETTER GO LOWER DOWN.



HE MUST HAVE RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS AND JUMPED OUT.



WHAT IS THAT NOISE? THERE IS SOMETHING HAPPENING OVER THERE!



THOSE BOYS ARE CHASING SOMETHING.



PANJA! IT IS MY FATHER!



THEY WERE JUST IN TIME TO SEE NILRAJ DART INTO A WAREHOUSE. THEY LANDED ON THE ROOF AND —

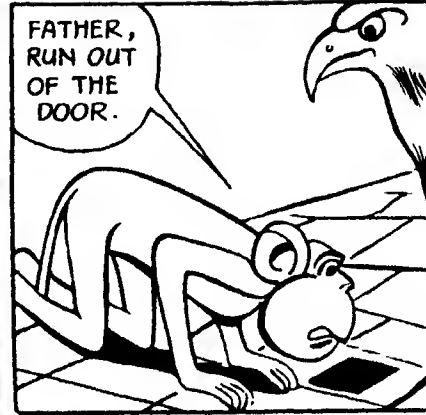
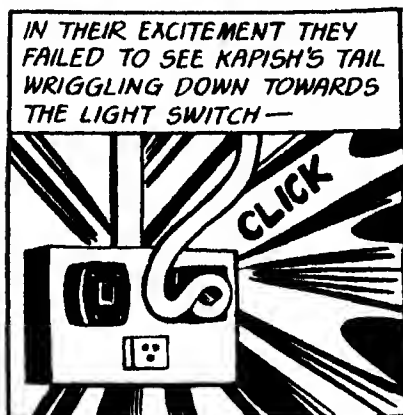
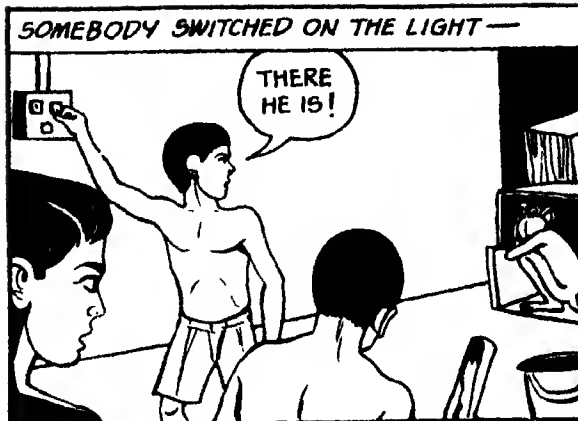
CAN YOU SEE YOUR FATHER, KAPISH?

NO.



IT WAS DARK IN THE WAREHOUSE.

WE CAN'T SEE SWITCH ON THE LIGHT!



STORY TIME

GRANDMA was telling the same story for the 628th time. Or maybe it was the 629th time. Grandma said she never counted, she only told stories. And Khoka did not even know how to count. He said 123, then 21, 16, 10. But Raja, who was in Std. II, knew how to count. He even knew how to add. And Moni was, of course, a clever girl and already knew how to count up to one thousand, though she was only in LKG.

So Moni and Raja get very bored with the 628th or 629th time story. It was such a dull, stupid story. It was not even a story, really. It did not happen to other people, nor was it a story of long, long ago. It was about the time when Khoka was still a baby, and their mother had taken Moni, Raja, and Khoka to the Dakshineswar temple on the banks of the river.

"And then you know what happened?"

asked Grandma, though they all knew, of course. "Khoka got lost!"

"Really, really, did I get lost?" asked Khoka, jumping on his bed. "I got lost. When I was still a baby, I got lost!"

"So what?" said Raja, crossly. When you hear the same story for the 628th or the 629th time, you can get very bad-tempered. "So what?" said Raja. "Anybody can get lost, there's nothing in that."

And Moni, who was such a clever girl, said, "When I was a baby, I could have got lost, too, but Ma did not take me to Dakshineswar temple, to get lost, that's all."

Khoka would have started crying, so Grandma hurriedly started telling the story again. "And so Khoka got lost. One minute he was in the courtyard crawling, and the next minute he was not to be seen! Moni was on Ma's right side, Raja was on Ma's



left side, but where was Khoka? Where did he disappear?"

"Did I really disappear? Like this—poof?" burst in Khoka, excitedly.

"You are not smoke," said Moni who was a clever girl. "Only smoke disappears, poof, like that."

"I am smoke, I am smoke!" cried Khoka. "I disappeared, I am smoke."

"If you are smoke, how can you play football?" demanded Raja. "You think smoke has legs?"

"I am smoke with legs," cried Khoka. "Am I not smoke with legs, Thamma?" he asked Grandma.

But Grandma immediately started the story again. "And so Khoka got lost. One minute he was there, crawling, next..."

"You've said that before, Thamma," said Moni, the clever girl.

"Oh yes, oh yes... I forgot. Where was I?" asked Grandma.

"Then Ma said, 'Where is Khoka? Where is my Khoka?'" said Khoka in a very important way. After all, he was the hero of the story and all heroes are important.

"Then Ma asked, 'Where is my Khoka gone?' She looked to the right and she saw Raja there..."

"No, I was on Ma's right side," interrupted Moni.

"Oh yes," said Grandma. "You were on the right. Then Ma looked to the left and saw Raja. But where was Khoka?"

"He was stealing a..." started Raja.

"Sssh," said Khoka. "It's not yet time for that. Moni has to start crying in the story."

"I did not cry at all," said Moni. "I am a big girl, I go to LKG. Why should I cry?"

"But you were not in LKG then," said Raja. "I was in LKG, not you. You did not even know how to count."

"Of course, I knew," said Moni, firmly. After all, she was a clever girl. "I knew how

to count even before I was born."

"How do you know you knew how to count?" asked Raja. "Before you were born, you did not even have fingers. You think you can count without fingers?"

"Sssh, sssh," said Khoka again. "And then, what happened, Thamma?"

"As if you don't know," said Raja. "Thamma is saying this story for the 628th time."

"The 629th time," said Moni.

"Sssh," said Grandma. "And then Moni started crying, 'Where is Khoka, where is Khoka?' And Raja started looking here, and started looking there, but without leaving Ma's sari."

"Why?" asked Khoka. "You would not have got lost. Only I got lost."

"You were not lost. You were..."

"Wait, wait," said Khoka. "Let Thamma say it."

"And so, Moni started crying, and Raja started looking, and Ma said, 'Where is Khoka? Where is my Khoka?' And all the people turned and stared. And Moni's blue frock was wet because of her crying, and Raja was..."

"Oh, it was an old frock," said Moni. "I don't care because it got wet."

"And Raja was clutching Ma's sari, and looking at the sky, and at the clouds, searching for Khoka."

"Then what happened, then what happened?" asked Khoka excitedly, jumping up and down, on the bed. This was the important part of the story.

But just at that moment, Ma came in. "What is all this?" she asked. "Why haven't you all gone to sleep? Poor Thamma should have her dinner now. Go to sleep, now, all of you."

"No, Ma, no," said Khoka.

"Ma, only one minute more," said Raja.

"Ma, only 60 seconds," said Moni.

"What for?" asked Ma. "Whatever for?"

"To finish the story," said Moni, Raja, and Khoka together.

"All right, all right," said Ma. "One minute only. 60 seconds." She, too, sat down near Thamma.

Grandma started. "And while all this was happening, what do you think Khoka was doing? He was.... he was...."

"Yes, Thamma, what was he doing?"

"Do tell, Thamma."

"Quick."

"He was eating a 'sandesh', sitting on Thamma's lap. And from where was the sandesh? He had stolen it from Thamma's bag!"

"Ho ho ho ho," laughed the children.

"He was not lost at all," said Raja.

"I was lost, I was lost," said Khoka.

"Only for 132 seconds," said Moni.

"But you've heard this story so many times," said Ma. "Why are you fighting over it now?"

"This is the 628th time," said Raja.

But Moni, who was a clever girl, said, "No, 629th time."

And Khoka, who was already closing his eyes in sleep, murmured "Tomorrow, it will be the 10th time."

Poile

WHEN THE END DRAWS NIGH

O to be young and happy and strong
and gay,
To be wanting to sing and to dance today!

To be the whirling wind,
The streaming star,
The striking sun,
And the buzzing bazaar!

To be the howling heaven,
The flaming firefly,
To be the towering tree,
And the bubbling butterfly!

O to be young and happy and strong and
gay,
To be wanting to sing and to dance today!

To be elated, enthusiastic,
Tauntingly trite,
To be shockingly shabby
And primly polite!

To be happily human,
Lamentably laughable,
To be tearfully untouched
By the traumatically terrible!

O to be young and happy and strong and
gay,
To be wanting to sing and to dance today!

To capture again those bobbing balloons,
Those abounding absurdities,
That life of laughing lollipops,
Of fun and love and joyous jovialities!

To forget today's rigorous regularity,
Today's depressing damps,
To forget today's dreary desolation,
Today's grey hairs, pains and cramps!

O to be young and happy and strong and
gay,
To be wanting to sing and to dance today!
To sing and to dance, to shout and to tease,
To talk as a child to the one on my knees!

This child! This child on my knees,
He holds the keys—to my eternity:
He is the one that carries my blood,
And will give it to another for continuity.

He is now me and I am now him;
I that will be no more tomorrow;
I will be one with the dust;
But in him I will dwell—for evermore.

*Deepti Merhotra (14)
India*

LITTLE CLOUD

'SAILING, sailing, sailing in the blue, blue sky,' sang Little Cloud to himself. 'No floating, no stopping, just sailing, simply sailing. A sailor's life is the best life in the sky!'

Little Cloud was awfully excited. For the first time in his life, he was going sailing all by himself. There was not a cloud to be seen for miles around. He was a solitary cloud in the bright, blue sky. Yet, he was not lonely. Sun, up above, was smiling down at him. Wind, his friend, was "whoosing" him along.

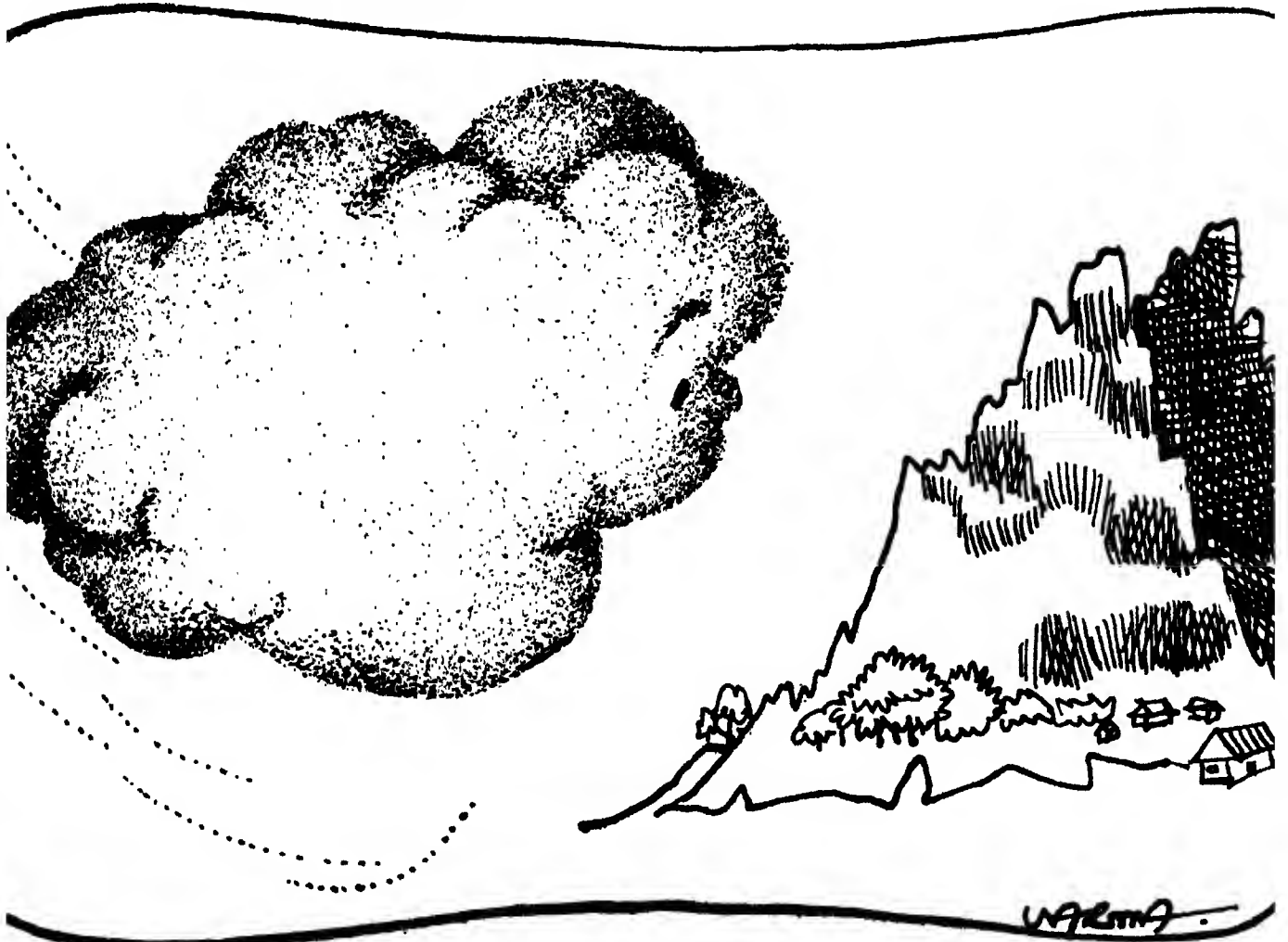
'Sailing, sailing,' Little Cloud chanted out aloud, 'a sailor's life is for me!'

It was only that morning that he had taken the big step, and he remembered how his mother had tried to prevent him from leaving home.

"Little Cloud," his mother had said, "you are still young. Stay by me a little longer before setting forth alone. A cloud's life is so delicate. You might just vanish!"

"And don't stoop too low," his brother, Cumulus, had advised. "Once you have fallen, you may never rise again."

Little Cloud remembered it all. He remembered how, for a short while, he had been scared. But now he was glad that he had left home all the same.



Little Cloud had promised to follow his family's advice. After all, his ambition was to be a good sailor and, finally, earn a silver lining! He had come across quite a few distinguished sailor-clouds in his life and they had all got on silver linings. 'How smart I will look with a silver lining attached to my white sailor's uniform,' thought Little Cloud to himself. Already he could imagine himself wearing one!

Just then Little Cloud heard a funny roaring sound. He looked around and saw a huge bird coming towards him. 'Ah, yes, it is a plane,' said Little Cloud, out aloud. He had heard about planes from his mother. They are strange metal birds with people inside them. And Little Cloud had been told that they are most unfriendly—all they ever do is make that rude roaring noise.

The plane flew past Little Cloud without even waving or saying 'Hello'. Naturally, Little Cloud made no attempt to be friendly either. He just watched the plane fly into the distance and saw it descend to the earth below. 'How very unusual!' thought Little Cloud. No one had told him that planes

could go down to the earth.

Little Cloud looked to see all that was beneath him. He could see mountains, rivers, plains, buildings, and people. In the sky, lower down, he could see lots and lots of birds. There was an eagle which was apparently trying to reach him. "Try harder," Little Cloud shouted. But the eagle made no reply, instead it swooped down to the earth.

Then Little Cloud thought to himself, that if ordinary creatures like the eagle and the plane could make it to the ground beneath, then, so could he. Already he had forgotten his family's warnings.

So, Little Cloud went down, down, way, way, down, and got stuck on the top of a hill!

The next morning, the people living on that hill woke up and found that there was a dense fog all around. They cursed the fog, little knowing that it was only Little Cloud who had fallen and could rise no more!

Viswajita Das

AT TIMES

Sometimes I'm an eagle,
Flying high
Reaching the top of the endless sky.
Nothing much matters,
Not even me
Nothing is better than being free.
And then I'm an owl,
Who is so hard to see,
I'm the only soul who understands me.
I lurk in the crowd,
Hiding my face,
Wondering why I came to this place.
Again I'm an ostrich,
Although I try

I run fast enough but I cannot fly.
And after I try,
I stop for a while,
I know that I'll never be in style.
At times I'm a kookaburra,
I mock myself,
My years have been bad from the first to
the twelfth.

I laugh at others,
I laugh at them all,
But they don't hear me, I am too small.

*Melissa Jandrasec (12)
Australia*

THE GUESTS-2

IT ALL BEGAN...when the Dastidar family — the doctor, his wife Menaka, and their daughter Urvashi — arrived at our place on a Sunday afternoon. We had made their acquaintance when we ourselves were in Kalimpong a year earlier. Grandpa had his eye operated upon by Dr. Dastidar and before we came away, he had invited the doctor and his family to come to our place whenever they liked.

We had missed Urvashi in Kalimpong, as she was at her school in Darjeeling. Naturally, Ina and myself were eagerly looking forward to meeting her, especially because she was of our age. Within minutes of their arrival we could see how pampered she was. While we thought she would love our company and share our room, she was asking for a room to herself! She was always calling our handsome alsatian, Teddy, a “mere street-dog”. She put on the mini-est of mini-frocks,

much to the horror of Grandma. She preferred to stay in bed rather than come out and see places. She called our favourite picnic spot, Canary Hill, a “little dump”...

Aunty Menaka never left her bed except for her meals, as she “hated exerting myself during holidays”, and as she found it “lovely to snatch a little siesta before supper”, or “a teeny-weeny snooze till lunch time”...

Of course, Uncle Dastidar was an exception, and he went out with Grandpa for long walks, or had long chats with him...

“What a family!” said Ina with a deep sigh. We decided Usha needed to be taken down a dozen pegs at least, but fortunately for her Grandma had reminded us that they were all our guests. So, we went up to her again: “You’ve come to a new place; why don’t you see what we have here?”



"SHALL we get going, Urvashi?" Ina asked.

"Oh I might as well take a look at this dump of yours," said Urvashi. "What hill did you say it is called?"

"Canary Hill...but let's go to the lakes," I said. "Possibly you'll like it better."

"Never knew there were any here," said Urvashi, in a contemptuous tone.

"Don't be silly," said Ina, nettled by her tone. "You've just come, how can you possibly know anything about the place?"

"Come along," I said quickly, before it could develop into an argument.

Urvashi was no walker. She puffed and panted and grumbled all the way. When we finally reached the place, she looked at us accusingly. "Why, these are only little ponds!"

"Why, what else did you expect?" said Ina. "They are jolly pretty. Everyone here raves about them."

"I dare say," said Urvashi looking superior. "You would, of course! I suppose you haven't seen anything better. But I who go to school in Darjeeling..."

"I'm sure it's a beautiful place," I cut in hurriedly seeing the expression on Ina's face, "but ours is a nice place, too. Anyway, it's foolish to make yourself miserable because this isn't *your* Darjeeling."

"Make myself miserable?" cried Urvashi. "You must be off your head! All I said was that I don't care for your tupenny-ha'penny ponds. So there!"

"Your idiom, my dear!" I said, trying to laugh. "We don't have pennies here. It's India, you know."

"So what?" said Urvashi. "I go to an English medium school and Miss Alpha-Beta, our head, has lived abroad all her life. We are accustomed to such idioms, even if it's unknown here."

"Miss Alpha-Beta, did you say?" Ina cried incredulously. "I'm sure no one can possibly have a name like that."

"It isn't her own name," said Urvashi. "That's something of a tongue-twister. Once our parlour maid called her Alpha-Beta by mistake and the name stuck."

"How funny!" we said laughing. Urvashi looked somewhat gratified. She could be quite nice if only she dropped her air of bored superiority, I thought. But that was not to be, at least not yet.

"Here's a fishing spot," I said pointing to a quiet corner of the lake. "Grandpa often comes here."

"You know, I once fell down that part of the lake when I was a babe of four," said Ina. "Tina fished me out!"

"Your family history is of no interest to me," said Urvashi looking superior again.

How could one make friends with such a girl? "Let's get back," I suggested. "What do you say, Urvashi?"

Urvashi shrugged her shoulders. "I can't think why you chose to come here, in the first place. What's there to see in two miserable little ponds?"

We thought it best to keep quiet. Back home, we were surprised to see Mrs. Dastidar at the dining table. "Hello, Honeypie," she said to Urvashi, "had a nice time?"

Urvashi opened her mouth to say something, then saw her father looking at her, and closed it again.

"Thank goodness she has one sensible parent," whispered Ina. I nodded.

Urvashi appeared grumpier than ever after tea. "Want to see Canary Hill?" I asked her.

"No!" she said emphatically. "I hate walking. Don't you do anything else in this miserable place except walk...walk and WALK? I'm sick of it!"

"Well! Never!" said Ina. "You've only gone for one single walk so far."

"It's more than enough!" said Urvashi. "I can now understand why you people are so dull."

Teddy had heard the word 'walk' and came running to us, his tail wagging nineteen to the dozen.

"The wretched terrier again!" said Urvashi.

"I'm sorry you find things dull," I said hurriedly. "But, you see, most of our friends have gone away for the vacation."

"Nina and Naveen are there," said Ina. "Let's ask Grandma if we may go there. We can play badminton with them."

"Or let's go to Recti's," I suggested. "We could have a game of table tennis there. I suppose you play both, Urvashi?"

"I loathe games!" said Urvashi. "They are as bad as walking."

We stared at her nonplussed. "Is there anything you like doing?" asked Ina, trying not to sound sarcastic.

"I love dancing," announced Urvashi. "I'm a fab. dancer."

Ina choked and tried to make it sound like a cough, while I bit my tongue trying to smother a fit of giggles. The very idea of fat Urvashi dancing was too hilarious for words.

"You mean classical dancing?" I asked, trying to sound serious and failing utterly.

"I meant ballroom dancing, of course!" said Urvashi. "Though I doubt if you know the first thing about it."

"I don't," said Ina, "it's utter bosh, anyway."

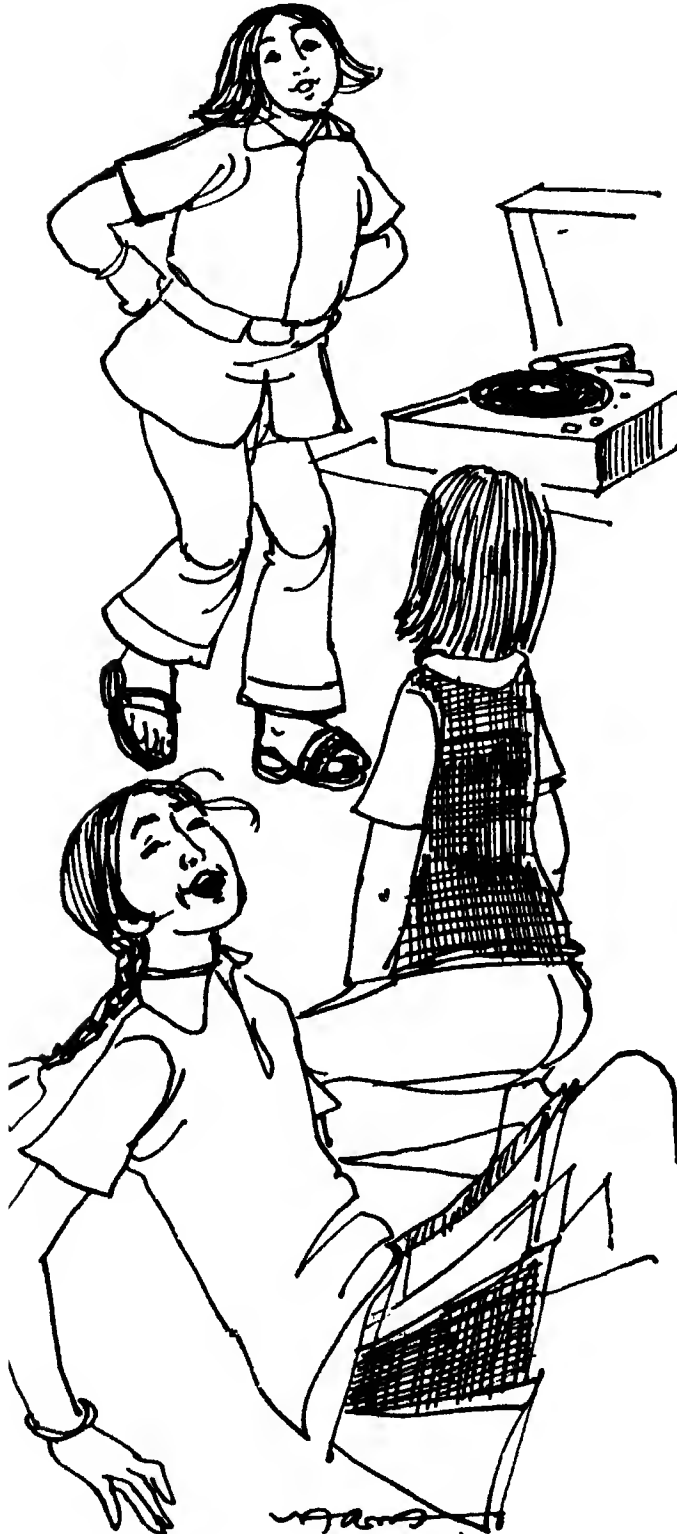
"Well," I said, "some of our friends do know a

little dancing, but most of us don't care for it."

"You wouldn't," said Urvashi scornfully. "You're both tom-boys. You'd cut a sorry figure in a school like ours."

"What is your school?" asked Ina.

"The Villa Alpina," said Urvashi with an air of royalty. "It's a very, very select school."



"I don't seem to have heard of it," I said. "Is it very new? Or don't you girls even compete in the I.S.C.?"

"Oh, exams!" said Urvashi scornfully. "Miss Alpha-Beta says it's much more important to be an accomplished lady and an ornament to society. She isn't nuts over our taking exams. Some girls do, though."

We were too stunned to speak. Urvashi held the floor, talking on and on about her wonderful school and all they did there. We soon realised that the only thing Urvashi wanted to do was to speak about herself. Everything else made her sulky and grumpy and ill-mannered.

So we let her talk — getting bored to tears ourselves. It was the only way to avoid quarrelling. "Some school!" grumbled Ina. "I'm getting sick of the very sound of Villa Alpina."

"I wonder if it's all true?" I said doubtfully. "Or is Urvashi laying it on with a trowel?"

"It might well be true," said Ina. "After all, there are a lot of eccentrics in the world. Urvashi doesn't seem capable of imagination. She's too lazy, for one thing."

"Shhh," I said. "Be careful."

Dr. Dastidar spent most of his time with Grandpa, while Mrs. Dastidar slept most of the time, horrifying poor Grandma to the last degree. Urvashi flatly refused to go for walks or play games. So, she spent all her time telling us about herself and her doings. "I'll soon go nuts at this rate," grumbled Ina. I agreed with her.

"Urvashi," I said trying to introduce a fresh topic. "didn't you say you were a fab. dancer?"

"Of course, I am," said Urvashi. "But a fat lot of use that is when no one here knows a thing about it!"

"A pity," I said. Frankly speaking, I could not imagine any of the boys in our class dancing. They'd much rather climb trees or go fishing.

"Isn't there any dance in which you don't need to hold on to a partner?" asked Ina.

"Well," said Urvashi pausing to think, "I could do the Nilgiri Twist."

"Wh...a...t twist did you say?" I asked amazed.

"The Nilgiri Twist," said Urvashi. "Miss Chanchal, who is from the Nilgiris, taught us. It's her own composition."

"I'll fetch the gramophone," said Ina. "What music would you like?"

Urvashi looked at our records and selected 'The Taquila Twist'.

We put on the record and the next moment both Ina and I were rolling on the floor in a fit of helpless laughter. Urvashi, looking a cross

between a sack of potatoes and an angry bull, was jumping about like a cat on a hot tin roof. I don't suppose I shall see a funnier sight if I live till Doomsday! "It's....it's....priceless!" said Ina, mopping her eyes.

Urvashi saw us and stopped in a huff. "What do you mean by laughing?" she said, glaring at us. "I think you're most frightfully ill-mannered and rude."

"Sorry, Urvashi," I said, "we didn't mean to be rude, but you did look so f-funny," I said collapsing with involuntary laughter, "and so perplexed...."

"Yes," giggled Ina, "like a hen trying to cross the road between two trucks."

"You're insufferable!" said Urvashi. "I don't ever want to speak to either of you again."

We had put our foot in it this time and no mistake! Urvashi refused to talk to us and sulked in corners, while Grandma scolded us sharply for leaving her alone.

"Let's go and ask her about her school," I suggested. "It's the only thing she talks about."

But Urvashi refused to be drawn in. To make matters worse, it began raining from the morning and looked like going on forever. We could not go out, nor could we play indoors with Urvashi sulking like fury. "Just the day for hearing spook-stories," said Ina.

"Do you know any, Urvashi?" I asked.

Urvashi deigned to look up. I suppose she, too, was getting tired of keeping quiet. "I wish you wouldn't talk slang," she said in a prim voice. "It's so unladylike. Miss Alpha-Beta says...."

"Spook isn't slang," I said. "Anyway, do you know any stories?"

"There is no such thing as a ghost," said Urvashi in a lofty voice.

"Never mind that," I said. "But what's wrong with stories? Don't you like reading them?"

"The blood-curdling ones," added Ina.

"I don't believe in such nonsense," said Urvashi, "so the question of blood-curdling does not arise."

"That's what you think," said Ina. "I could tell you some that would make you yell all right."

"Rats!" said Urvashi.

Dusk had set in. It was raining cats and dogs outside. All of a sudden, the lights went out.

"Great!" said Ina, jumping up to light a candle. "Just the right atmosphere."

Urvashi looked disgusted. "Do you mean to say they won't put it right at once?"

"Just hear the storm raging," I said. "Some tree must have fallen on the wire and snapped it. It will need some repairing."

"Let's have the stories," said Ina. "Tina, you'd better begin."

I told some of the stories I had read. After me, Ina came out with her collection of spook-yarns. She is a born story-teller and succeeded in introducing an eerie note in the atmosphere.

"Don't you know any ghost stories, Urvashi?" I asked again.

"I don't," said Urvashi. "How you both can stuff yourselves with such arrant rubbish is beyond me — at your age, too!"

"That reminds me," said Ina, "I read a simply marvellous yarn the other day. I'll tell you, if you like."

"Go ahead," I said.

It was one of the ghastliest stories I'd ever come across. Here the spook — named Meera — took the form of a black wolf and haunted his foes. Ina made it sound absolutely gruesome. Just when she was relating the grand finale, our candle flickered and went out.

"Oooh!" I cried.

"Tina! Ina! Where are you?" came Grandma's voice from below. "Is Teddy with you?"

"No, Grandma," I shouted back.

"He isn't anywhere around, and I'm worried," said Grandma.

We ran down the stairs in the darkness. This was most unlike Teddy. He never wandered around by himself, and he hated thunder. We had taken it for granted that he was in Grandpa's study, where he loved to be.

Just then the lights came on. We hunted all over the place calling him loudly. But there was no answering bark. No sign of him at all. The gate stood ajar. Obviously, he must have gone off on his own. Grandpa was furious with the gardener whose duty it was to lock the gate every evening.

Dinner was a miserable meal for us. Neither Ina nor I could eat much, though Grandma kept assuring us that Ted would turn up like a sad penny.

"He's such a lovely, friendly pup," said Ina. "What if someone has stolen him?"

"No one in his senses would lift a street terrier like yours," said Urvashi.

"Oh, dry up," I said, feeling annoyed and worried.

Urvashi gave me a stare, stamped her foot, and rushed up the stairs. By the time Ina and I went up, she was already in bed. We put off the light and did the same.

We were awakened by a piercing scream in the middle of the night. It was Urvashi.

"What's up?" I cried, rubbing my eyes.

"Meera, the spook-wolf!" cried Urvashi. "He is here. I saw him!"

"Don't be absurd," said Ina, getting up. "It's only a story."

"It isn't," sobbed Urvashi, "I saw him myself."

Just then we, too, saw a pair of eyes glistening in the dark and a coal black figure. "It is a wolf! A black wolf!" cried Urvashi.

Ina jumped at the apparition and threw her arms round it. "Teddy! You naughty dog! What a scare you gave us!" she said.

I put on the light. It, indeed, was Teddy. But what a Teddy! He was covered with coal-dust from head to foot!

"In whose coal-bin did you get locked, you bouncer?" I said.

"Woof! Woof!" said Teddy.

"Take him down, Ina, and lock him in the shed," I said. "We must give him a bath the first thing tomorrow morning, or Grandma will have something to say."

"Get up and see your spook, Urvashi!" said Ina. "And I thought you didn't believe in them?"

For once, Urvashi had nothing to say. But this one incident brought her down several pegs. Urvashi did not put on her superior airs after that. So, it turned out to be quite an enjoyable holiday, after all!

Swapna Dutta

(Concluded)



"The competition is over"

RINKOO SINHA knew he was not handsome. His brother was, and so was Boren Haldar, the Captain, the leader of his class. Rinkoo Sinha knew he was not handsome at all; he was fat and wore spectacles. But, that did not mean that he could not play football or cricket like the others and Boren Haldar, nor did that mean that he was almost blind. No, with his new glasses he could see and read very well; in fact, he could read better than most of the boys in his class, especially poems. But nobody seemed to appreciate that, not even the teacher. Everybody called him 'Fatso' and 'Ullu', and told him to roll himself out of their way. So, Rinkoo Sinha rolled himself out of their way, sat near by, and watched them play hide-and-seek, football and cricket—all the games he would like to play and knew he would play them well.

For a long time, Rinkoo Sinha kept away from the boys of his class. He spent most of the time reading and writing and did not feel unhappy. But the moment he stopped reading and writing, he remembered that he was lonely, ugly, and fat. He longed to have a friend, a friend like the Captain, Boren Haldar.

Rinkoo Sinha kept on reading and even started to think. He thought a lot about the universe, the stars, the sun, and how far it would be to the moon. Then he thought about steam engines and radio waves, and how the television worked, and then he thought about himself, and how he could improve his appearance. He recalled hearing people talk about reducing exercises and diets. Aunt Sheila once went on a crash diet, which didn't do her any good, for thereafter she could eat only soups for a long time. Rinkoo Sinha knew that a crash diet was out of question; so he would do exercises. If he couldn't do anything about his fatness and his specs, he certainly could do something about his figure. He decided he would start from tomorrow, the very next day.

The following day, Rinkoo Sinha left home after completing his homework. He 'rolled by' many boys from his class, even Boren Haldar, the Captain, whom only his best friends were allowed to call by his name.

"Look," they cried, "here comes Fatso; here is Ullu; clear the way for Jumbo the elephant."

Rinkoo Sinha, Ullu, Fatso, Jumbo the elephant, went past them without making any comment. His heart was beating hard; he felt very ugly, very fat, and very, very, sad. Down he went to the river and, along the riverside, away from the town, till he came to a place where he was sure nobody would see him. There he tried to do a number of exercises. He did 20 dips, 15 sit-ups, and 30 bend-downs, and ran up and down on the spot. After a short rest, he put on his swimming trunks and got into the river.

Oh, the water was cold, the water was dark! His feet stepped on pebbles and stones, on something soft and slippery. He shuddered. To learn swimming was difficult, to learn swimming was dangerous, it was a frightening thing to be alone in the water. But he tried breast strokes and then the movements of the legs. He struggled, he splashed, he went down and swallowed water, he came up to the surface, breathing hard, shaking the water out of his hair. But he did not give up. He tried again and again, till his arms were aching and he was shivering with cold. He got out of the water, sat down in the grass, and started to think. Yes, he would come here every day till he knew swimming better than anybody in his class.

That is why Rinkoo Sinha left his house every afternoon at the same time and returned with wet hair.

Everytime he would pass the boys of his class. He would pass the Captain, Boren Haldar. He hoped that one day, maybe, he would be his friend.

When the 'new boy' entered the classroom just before the bell rang, everybody

looked at him and gaped. Boy, he was strong! Boy, he was tall; and how confident he was! "Hi," he said and looked around him with cold eyes. "Who is the leader of this class?"

For a moment there was silence. Then the Captain stood up and said, "I am the leader of the class. I am Captain."

The new boy looked him up and down, with both hands fixed in his pockets.

"Well," he said, "you were the leader of the class. Now it is me!"

Rinkoo Sinha and all the other boys held their breath. They looked at Boren Halidar and at the new boy, who stood there grinning broadly.

The Captain did not grin. Very coolly he said, "That remains to be seen. Meet me after class."

When school was over, everybody assembled in the yard behind the school, gathered around the Captain and the new boy, who stood there, his hands fixed in his pockets, smiling a broad crooked smile.

"Well?" he asked. "You wanted to see me. Here I am!" The way he spoke and the way he looked at Boren Halidar, the Captain, annoyed everybody, most of all Rinkoo Sinha.

"Look here," said the Captain, "If you want to be the leader, you have to prove your superiority to all of us, in whichever way you may choose!"

The new boy grinned broader. "Good speech," he said, "but I like action." And with that, he jumped two steps forward and punched Boren Halidar hard in the face. Boren Halidar was so much taken by surprise that he had no time even to turn his face. The blow sent him down to the ground. The new boy grinned, pushed his hands back into his pockets, and said, "Now, do you see how much superior I am? Does anybody else want a fight?"

Rinkoo Sinha gasped. That was very unfair. He looked at the boys around him, hoping that they would come to the Captain's rescue, but most of them stood there silent, gazing down at their feet.

It was the Captain who spoke up, trying to get on his feet. "I want another fight, a fair fight, then I will show you."

"This was a fair fight," grinned the new

boy, "wasn't it?" Again he looked at the boys around him and at Rinkoo Sinha, who suddenly heard himself say, "No, it was not."

Everybody looked at him in surprise, his classmates, the Captain, and the tall, strong, new boy.

"Ha," he laughed, "that's too funny," and he clapped his knees with his hands. "Ho ho, ha ha! Fatso wants to fight me. Come on, come on! Show us what you are made of. I hope not only of fat."

Rinkoo Sinha felt his heart sinking and then beating faster than ever before. He looked at the Captain, Boren Halidar, who was still sitting on the ground looking up at him in amazement. Rinkoo Sinha knew that he had to say something, and whatever he said or did, he had to win, or else he would never again get a chance. "Well," he cleared his throat, "well, let us have a swimming competition. Whoever crosses the river first will be the winner."

"Which river?" cried the new boy. "Hi, show me that thing you call a river. Let's go, so that I can show you what a good swimmer I am. Crossing the river is child's play for me!"

Slowly, the Captain, Boren Halidar, got up. His eyes were fixed on Rinkoo Sinha. He came towards him. "Fatso!" he said in his calm voice, yet showing a certain uneasiness. "I mean, Rinkoo. You don't have to do it, do you hear? I can fight this boy, sure I can. You see, it is not easy to cross that river. Especially if you have never tried it before."

"But I have," replied Rinkoo Sinha, "not often, but I have." The Captain looked at him in disbelief. "You?" he asked. "You have crossed the river? Do you know swimming so well?"

"I will try to do it today!" answered Rinkoo Sinha carefully. And so he did.

All the boys of his class stood behind him, when he jumped into the water. The new boy followed him. The water was cold and brownish green. Rinkoo Sinha feared that the current might be stronger than before. He swam well, yet the boy next to him did not do badly either. He threw his hands up and shouted some jokes towards the row of boys at the riverside behind him.

Rinkoo Sinha did not joke. With strong strokes, he pushed himself through the water, breathing slowly, trying to save his breath and strength for crossing the river current, which ran ahead of them. Now the force of the current started to pull him downwards. But Rinkoo Sinha knew exactly what to do. He swam the river upwards till he had nearly crossed the drawing force of the current.

"Hi," cried the new boy from behind him. "See how I am crossing the current." And down he dived, shaking his legs in the air.

Rinkoo Sinha knew that this wasn't a good way to do it. The force of the under current would turn and whirl him around. He was worried. He looked over his shoulder, hoping to see the head of the new boy come up to the surface again. But it seemed minutes before he finally saw a hand shoot up from the water, and the face of the new boy, who gasped, spit water and disappeared again.

"Hi, come on now," cried Rinkoo Sinha, "stop playing the fool."

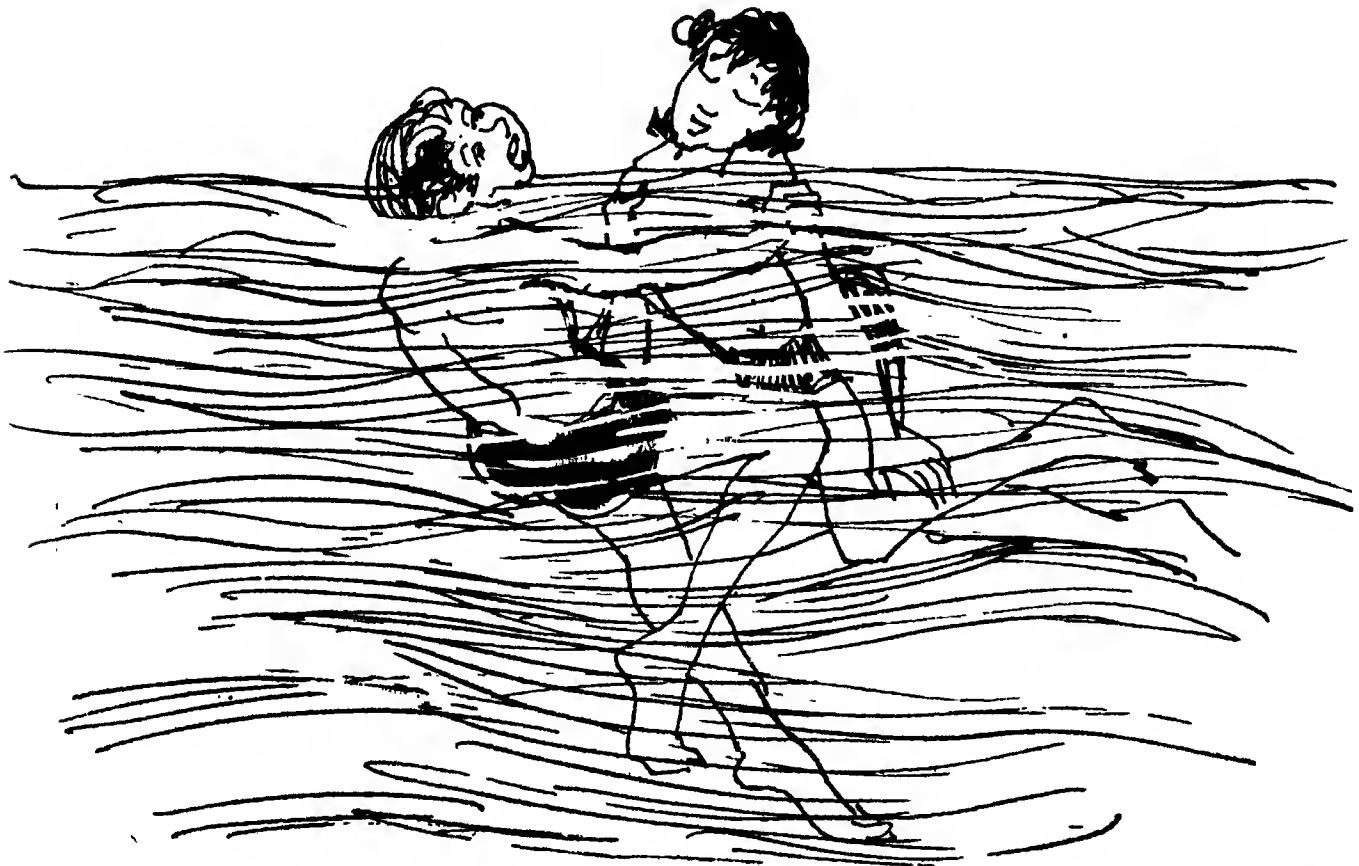
When the new boy's face appeared again,

he was crying, "Help, help!" He coughed and disappeared again.

Rinkoo Sinha shivered. He felt that the danger was real. He swam towards the boy as fast as he could, as fast as the current would allow him.

"Hold your hands up," he shouted. But there was nobody to hear it. His companion seemed to have disappeared. Rinkoo Sinha shivered with fright. A cold wave ran down his spine. He took a deep breath and dived, searching with his eyes, and with his hands, for the new boy. The water hit his eyes, went into his ears, and blocked them. His chest seemed to expand, seemed to burst. He could not remain in the water any longer. He reached the surface, coughed, inhaled and dived down again towards a shadow, not very far from him. He moved towards it, touched it, got hold of an arm, grabbed it, and did not let it go. He pushed himself up to the surface, pulled the new boy's head above the water, shaking him. "Come on, come on, come on," he cried.

The current turned him around. Water



whirled around when the weight of the other body pulled him down again. Rinkoo Sinha did not know what to do. He only knew and told himself over and over again not to loosen the grip, not to allow the other boy to disappear in the current again. He had to keep his own and the other's face above the water. He tried to breathe at a regular pace, but water got into his mouth. He coughed, spat water, and nearly lost hold of the other boy's shoulder. "Help!" cried Rinkoo Sinha in despair. "Help, he is drowning!"

And, then, he didn't know why, but the words forced them over his lips. "Boren!" he cried. "Boren, help!"

And all of a sudden, the Captain, Boren Halдар, was beside him. "Hold on, Rinkoo," he called out. "I'll take the new one."

Boren Halдар took the new boy by his shoulders and dragged him towards the shore. By that time, most of the other boys were also in the water and together they pulled the motionless body of the new boy to the shore. They softly slapped his face, slapped his back, opened and closed his arms over his chest, till he threw up a lot of water and collapsed, breathing heavily, on the grass.

Rinkoo Sinha, too, was breathing hard. "I did all I could," he said and looked at the Captain.

"I know," the Captain said, "you did very well. Nobody could ever have done better." And he gave Rinkoo Sinha a very friendly smile.

Rinkoo Sinha felt a wave of happiness rush through his body. All of a sudden, the



day had brought everything bright; everything was fine and wonderful, and he did not feel so very down and out. At that moment, the new boy opened his eyes and looked up at Rinkoo Sinha, the Captain and the boys. He blinked, his hands formed into fists. He jumped up and looked at them, especially Rinkoo Sinha, with fierce, burning eyes.

"You crook," he shouted, "you cheat! Why did you pull me under water? I have not lost, I am strong! I am faster and stronger than everyone of you!"

The boys stared at him in surprise, speechless, shocked, like Rinkoo Sinha, who whis-

pered, "But I did not, I did not..."

With a pale face he turned towards the Captain, who told the new boy in a cool voice, "We know, we all know you very well now, and do not wish to know any more of you!" and then he did something nobody had ever seen him do before. He spat down on the ground, short of the new boy's bare feet.

He turned round and quietly put his arm around Rinkoo Sinha's shoulder. "Come on, Rinkoo," he said, "let's go home. The competition is over." And he waved to the others to follow him.

Sigrun Srivastava

(Continued from page 8)

was a lot of excitement and joy in the castle.

Puss rushed back to the encampment and told his mistress that he had made all arrangements at the castle. She was perplexed, but she trusted him, for he had never let her down.

When the royal entourage reached the castle gates, the people rushed out onto the road to welcome them, shouting and rejoicing. The queen was surprised at all this excitement and she stopped a young man to ask him the reason for all this merry-making. He replied, "We are only greeting our mistress, the beautiful Princess of Cattenborg."

The king and the prince were also very surprised. But most surprised of all was the girl sitting by their side. When the gates opened and the royal party saw the beautiful castle, they thought the princess had really been right when she said that everything was so beautiful at the castle of Cattenborg.

The wedding was celebrated with pomp and splendour. The prince and the princess were very happy. They made Puss a member of the royal family, and they all lived happily together in their beautiful castle of Cattenborg.

PINKIE

A FRENCH LEGEND

Huon and Auberon

HUON and Gerard were the two sons of Sengin, the Duke of Bordeaux. The two lads were on their way to Paris, to join the French king's court. Though the sun shone bright overhead and they were covered with dust, Huon sang along gaily as he rode. Gerard, on the other hand, rode silently, feeling gloomy, since he could not get rid of an evil foreboding while he listened to his brother singing.

They had just reached a small wood on the outskirts of Paris, when suddenly they came face to face with a band of armed riders. One of them attacked Gerard, who was unable to defend himself and at once fell to the ground motionless. This angered Huon, and he immediately turned on the attacker, striking his sword fiercely, straight into his heart. Seeing this, the other riders fled and thus the little fight was soon over. Huon rushed to his brother's side and saw to his relief that his brother was not seriously wounded. He



helped him onto his horse and they continued their journey not knowing that the dead assailant was none other than the king's son, Charlot. The traitor Amaury had set the young prince against the two brothers, lying that they had refused to submit to the king's authority.

And, so, Huon had to be punished. But the king, being a just ruler, commanded Amaury to fight with Huon, to prove who had spoken the truth. Huon fought with his opponent in the presence of a large audience in the Royal court. They charged at each other on horseback a hundred times. They even fought on foot and there, too, they proved to be equally strong. Then, suddenly, Huon struck Amaury down and proved that he had been falsely accused.

The king, however, could not make a proper decision and he sent Huon on a mission to Babylon. He was to carry a message from the king to Gaudisse, the great Emir of all heathens. But this task was not so easy. For, he had to cut off the head of the first heathen he came across in the palace of the Emir. He also had to kiss the Emir's daughter thrice and take back the Emir's beard to the French king. If he failed to accomplish these tasks, Huon's life would be forfeited.

Babylon was far away from his dear France, and as he rode along, Huon missed all that he loved. As he crossed one country after another, he felt more and more homesick and his eyes would fill with tears, much to the distress of his companions.

One day, as they were riding through a dense forest towards the Red Sea, suddenly, as if from nowhere, a small dwarf came and stood in their path. He was not taller than a three-year-old child and he had a beautiful face. He had a gorgeous cloak draped over his shoulders and in his hand he held a bow. A horn, delicately carved in gold and ivory, hung round his neck.

Huon was enchanted by the sight of this strange creature. But his companions warned him not to talk to him. Perhaps he was a jungle gnome or a sorcerer, in which case he would cast them under his spell.

But the little man halted them and smilingly said, "I greet you to my forest and would wish you to greet me as your friend."

Huon and his men turned their horses round and fled towards another path. But the dwarf placed his hand over his heart and, instantly, lightning struck and a terrible storm broke out. It then rained heavily, and the animals in the forest were terrified.

Huon and his men rode on till they reached a flooded river. It was impossible to cross it, so they turned back to search for another route. They wandered through the forest for many days till they reached the very place where they had met the dwarf. As they halted there tired and exhausted, the smiling dwarf appeared again. He approached Huon and said, "I have the power to read every human mind. And as I see nothing but goodness and loyalty in you, I wish to offer you my help in your difficult task. Since you would not take my help, I had to do something to get you back. But, let me tell you who I am. My name is Auberon. My father was a great warrior and my mother the fairest of all forest fairies. I am their only son. When I was born, four fairy godmothers came to see me, and each one gave me a gift.

"The first fairy was not very wise. She decided that I should be a dwarf all my life. And, so, I stopped growing after I was three. However, she also wanted to give me something good, so she gave me a beautiful face, and it has always been as you see it now.

"The second fairy gave me the power to read other people's minds. And, so, when I look at someone, I come to know all about his good and evil deeds, about his glories and sins, even those he is yet to commit!

"The third fairy endowed me with something even better than that. I can appear wherever I choose to, even if it is the farthest corner of the world, and I can even conjure a splendid palace with a hall laden with good food.

"The fourth fairy gave me a most unusual gift. In the whole world, there is no



bird or beast who will not obey my orders. Even the wildest of animals become timid at my command. I will also not grow old, but remain as I am today. When the time comes for me to die, my place will be at god's feet."

Huon and his men listened to him all the while, absolutely wonderstruck. And they were even more surprised when the dwarf said, "I know you haven't eaten for three whole days and you are all tired. Come and have your fill." And from nowhere, a palace appeared in front of them and Huon and his knights were treated to a feast.

Huon felt a little afraid of such miracles, and he, therefore, asked the dwarf's permission to leave. But Auberon had two more gifts to give Huon—a goblet and the horn of gold and ivory that hung round his neck. "As long as your heart is pure, you can drink from this goblet whenever you want."

Huon put the goblet to his lips and sure enough, it filled up with wine!

"And whenever you blow this horn, I will be there, wherever you are. Now I will not detain you anymore." With these words, Auberon bade his friends good-bye.

Huon and his knights continued on their journey, thinking all the while about their strange encounter. Being quite mischievous, Huon put the horn to his lips and blew it hard. They heard the thunderous beat of horse hooves, and through the trees rode Auberon, with a thousand armed men.

"Forgive me, I was only testing the horn," Huon apologised.

"You are forgiven," Auberon smiled. "I feel sorry when I think of the number of mistakes you will make in life. But you will grow with them. Farewell once again. And, remember, you are not only taking my goblet and my horn, but also my heart."

Huon travelled on to Babylon and he successfully carried out all the tasks with the help of Auberon. He returned triumphantly to the king of France, even taking with him the beautiful Esclarmonde, the daughter of the Babylonian king.

Alaka Shankar

HOW and WHY

Bhola Shrestha, Kathmandu, asks : How do hiccups occur ? How can we stop them ?

Spasms in the diaphragm (a muscle and tissue partition separating the lungs from the abdominal cavities) appear in the form of hiccups. They are caused by the irritation of structures supplied by nerves communicating with the phrenic nerve.

You may have noticed that hiccups start when you have either eaten or drunk fast. But sometimes the cause is not so obvious. One can start hiccuping sitting in a classroom or a movie theatre! (Some sensitive children suffer agonies when this happens.) There are many home remedies for stopping hiccups. Some people think that frightening the person can make the hiccups entirely disappear. But I am sure this method should not be tried too often! Another is to drink a glass full of water. This never used to work for me, however, and what did work was concentration on the breathing. When you get hiccups you can try the procedure given below. 'Close your eyes and fix your mind on your breathing. Start deep rhythmic diaphragm breathing, all the time following the breath mentally'. This method is very simple and hiccups often stop within seconds of doing this. Hiccups that don't stop for a very long time require medication and sometimes hospitalization. When they start and persist in the last stages of an acute ailment, a complete collapse of the nervous system can be indicated.

Sukhbir Singh Bhatia, New Delhi, asks: What is a chronometer? What are its uses?

A chronometer is a very accurate clock, used in navigation to provide the time of observation of celestial bodies for determining positions at sea. It was invented in 1735 by John Harrison — a self-educated English horologist — who spent the next 30 years, after discovery, perfecting the instrument.

A chronometer looks the same as an ordinary clock, but is housed in a special

wooden box with a glass top. This, in turn, is placed in a second cloth-padded box to reduce the effect of vibrations and temperature changes. Inside, it has a variable lever device, which controls the power transmitted by the mainspring, so that it remains uniform as it unwinds; and a temperature compensating device made from a combination of different metals with different coefficients of expansion. These make the rate of losing or gaining time approximately uniform at all temperatures. On the surface, as against an ordinary clock, it has two additional dials superimposed. A half second hand and another which indicates the number of hours since the last winding. These clocks are wound at the same time daily, and are checked for accuracy by means of radio time signals.

Why are birds not affected by electric shocks, though bats are known to receive such shocks?

Biologists would regard this as a revolutionary discovery if it were true. However, we do see some large bats hanging dead from electric cables and not all kinds of birds that perch on them. If you see a small bat hanging upside down, chances are that it is fast asleep and not dead! The only answer I can think of is that since the larger bats have a large wing span (when in flight), and when they pump into cables, their body comes simultaneously in contact with two parallel running cables that have a considerable voltage difference between them. Voltage difference means that some of the current is forced to run through the body of the bat. The bat will then get an electric shock powerful enough to kill it. On the other hand, birds perch on the same wire, and the voltage difference between the space of their feet is very small. Accordingly, a very tiny trickle of current passes through their bodies, which is hardly felt by them.

Meera Ramakrishnan

A Feast of Runs

IN late 1926, on the vast and beautiful Melbourne cricket ground, two of the best teams in Australia, New South Wales and Victoria, were to play in their Sheffield Shield round. Many pens must have written about this match numerous times, but it will continue to be written in future.

Let me first introduce the players of these two teams. New South Wales were comparatively the weaker side as their players had less experience. They had just one batsman in skipper Kippax, who had enough experience, and the only other experienced players were Andrews and spin bowler Arthur Mailey.

Victoria had such batsmen like Woodfull, Ponsford, captain Ryder, and Hendrey who were in top form. Critics pointed out that to get Victoria within 400 runs would be quite fortunate.

The match started on a Friday; it was Christmas eve. The toss was won by Kippax and he elected to bat. At the end of the first day, N.S.W. were all out for 221 runs. The next day being Christmas, the match was resumed on Monday. The N.S.W. players came out to field, ignorant of the battering they were going to receive. Woodfull and Ponsford, the well known Australian opening pair, opened the innings for Victoria. These batsmen plundered the N.S.W. bowling mercilessly till the first wicket fell at 375 runs! Woodfull was very lucky not to be out for 7 runs, when he survived a sure run out chance. Ponsford drove a no-ball from McNemi high in the air and Woodfull charged for a run. But Ponsford gave no response, as there was already a run in that no-ball. Here, Kippax caught the ball and threw it straight to McNemi for an easy run out. But McNemi was in such a hurry that he threw down the wickets before even holding the ball. Woodfull calmly walked to his crease. This chance proved very expensive as Woodfull, later, piled up 133 runs.

Hendrey joined Ponsford, who was bat-

ting in full swing. Usually, it is observed that after a huge partnership, a wicket falls. But this did not happen, as Hendrey settled down quickly. Ponsford was in an attacking mood that day. The second day's play ended with Victoria scoring 573 for one wicket gone. Ponsford had scored 334 runs, while Hendrey was on 86.

Mailey, who was the main bowler of N.S.W., was very unlucky to be flogged all over the ground. When Ponsford was in his dressing room, Mailey asked him to show his bat.

"Why?" asked Ponsford.

"I just wanted to see if your bat is broader than usual," said Mailey mockingly.

"You should know better," taunted Ponsford. "Aren't you seeing it all day?"

Play resumed the next day and people flocked the ground in the hope of seeing Ponsford breaking Clem Hill's record of 365 runs scored in 1900-01. But, unluckily for him and the spectators, he was bowled by Morgan for 352. His 352 came in only 363 minutes of splendid batting. After he went, the score slumped from 613 for 2 to 657 for 5 wickets.

Ryder then joined Hendrey and gave the N.S.W. bowlers such a thrashing that they would surely like to forget. Hendrey, just after completing his century, was out to Mailey giving him his first wicket. Desperation forced Kippax to try each and every bowler, except keeper Ratcliffe, Jackson and Steele at least to contain Ryder, if not get him out. But nothing worked on Ryder, who went on plundering the bowling till he was out for 295. In his 295, the first 100 came in 115 minutes, second in 74 minutes, and the last 95 in only 56 minutes and contained as many as 32 fours and 6 sixes. When, on 275, he hit Andrews's first ball for 4, the second went for a huge 6, the third for 4, the fourth for another 6, and the fifth ball landed right into the safe hands of Kippax standing on the boundary line.

In the pavilion, somebody offered Mailey

his condolences for getting hammered all over the place.

Mailey replied, "If catches are dropped, what more do you expect?"

"Catches? I didn't see any catch being dropped."

"Well, twice Ryder hit the ball on the road, but none of the people caught it," joked the humorous Mailey.

The score now leaped towards the coveted 1,000 run mark. Alice, who hit 63 runs, had the honour of hitting the 1,000th run. Hartcuff (61), Lidicut (36) and Blackie (27 n.o.) took the score to 1,107 runs. Thus, Victoria broke her own record of 1,059 runs against Tasmania. This gigantic total is at present untouched. One thing has to be mentioned about the N.S.W. team, that through all that merciless flogging they got from the hands of Victoria batsmen, they never lost hope and fought it up to the last.

In their second innings N.S.W. were all out for 230 runs, thus losing the match by an innings and 656 runs.

The Victoria score read as follows:

Woodfull	c	Ratcliffe	b	Andrews	133
Ponsford	c		b	Morgan	352
Hendrey	c	Morgan	b	Mailey	100
Ryder	c	Kippax	b	Andrews	295
Love	c	Ratcliffe	b	Mailey	6
King	c	Ratcliffe	b	Mailey	7
Hartcuff	c	McGurk	b	Mailey	61
Lidicut			b	McGurk	36
Alice			Run Out		63
Morton			Run Out		0
Blackie			Not Out		27
			Extras		27
					1107

Two weeks later, when these two teams met for a return round, N.S.W. scored 469 runs, with Kippax making a splendid 217 runs. And believe it or not, the same Victoria were shot out for a paltry 35 runs. McNemi, the wicketless bowler in the previous match, took 7 good wickets.

Cricket, surely, is an unpredictable game.

Hemant B. Pai

Dear Reader,

Here is a unique opportunity to make friends with the children of the world.

Nearly 2,000 children from various countries are members of the Children's World Pen-Friends Club. If you, dear reader, are not already a member, you can become one by filling in the attached coupon and mailing it to us. After enrolment, your name and other details will appear in the "Pen Friends Corner".

The first list of names will appear in the July issue.

EDITOR

CHILDREN'S WORLD PEN-FRIENDS' CLUB

Dear Editor,

I would like to be a member of the Children's World Pen-Friends' Club. My subscriber No. is---

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(IN BLOCK LETTERS)

_____ (age*) _____

Address: _____

Hobbies: _____

Pen-friend wanted in (Country) _____

*Age limit: 16 years

Signature

PUZZLES

HIDDEN WORDS

- I. Pull out the vegetable hiding in each sentence:—
 1. In the camp, each one of us will have the turn to cook.
 2. At every turn I pass before I take the next step.
 3. It is not advisable to be angry all the time.
 4. Mother placed before our teacher a dish of salad.
 5. In the hostel, cleaning our desks is our first morning duty.
 6. I bought on the spot a toy at a very cheap price.
 7. I owe my success to the boon I once received from my Guru.
 8. Early morning, beating of temple drums tickle us and make us get up from bed.
- II. Can you smell a flower in each sentence?
 1. Fair is the game, and you have a good chance to win.
 2. Recast the poem in prose order.
 3. I know soda is your favourite drink.
 4. The young chap is well-up in grammar.
 5. The steward was kind enough to allot us suitable seats.
 6. You are for chiding me all the time. It is very disgusting.
 7. Though a good worker, Kasim Ali lacks initiative.
- III. Locate the disease in each sentence:—
 1. I suppose you are not going out in the rainy weather.
 2. I have something in my closed hand. Just make a guess.
 3. With these injections, the colic ought to be cured.
 4. Boss will sack you if ever you are caught stealing.
 5. The hostel warden guessed rightly who the culprit was.
 6. I am fully armed and can certainly meet any emergency.
 7. I am told the new convert I go to see is a god-fearing man.

ANIMALS QUIZ

1. Which is the most handsome of all English lizards?
2. Which bird of the parrot family has the most brilliantly coloured plumage?
3. Which are the two most important food fish found in the North Atlantic?
4. Which mosquito is the carrier of Malaria—the male or the female?
5. Which is the smallest member of the Monkey family?
6. What is another name for a river horse?
7. Which is the largest land animal?
8. Which is the heaviest of all flying birds?
9. Which creature is the giant of the reptile family?
10. Which is the largest living animal?
11. Which are the two kinds of beavers?
12. What is the correct name for silkworm?
13. Is the seahorse a kind of fish?
14. Which is the biggest flightless bird?
15. For approximately how many years does the giant tortoise of the Galapagos Island live?

H. Venkateswaran (13)

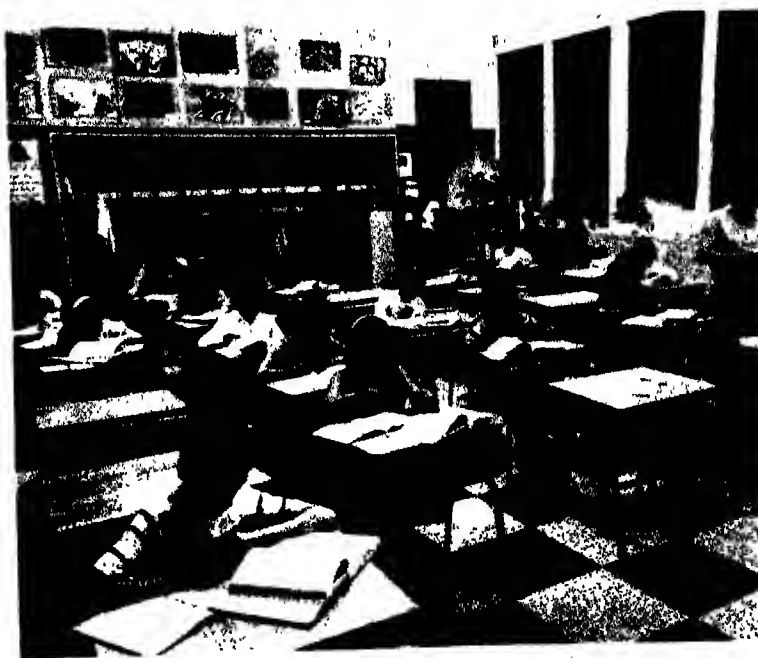
more than 400 years.
 of pipe fishes, 14. The ostrich, 15. For
 mori, 13. Yes, it is a member of the family
 American and the European, 12. Barmbyx-
 elephants and as heavy as 20, 11. The
 The Blue Whale, which is as long as 10
 9. The Anaconda of South America, 10.
 elephant, 8. The South African Bustard,
 Marmoset, 6. The hippopotamus, 7. The
 and the herring, 4. The female, 5. The
 lacerata agilis), 2. The Macaw, 3. The cod
 1. The sand lizards of the heaths (the
Animals Quiz:
 5. Dengue, 6. Cancer, 7. Vertigo.
 III 1. Gout, 2. Ague, 3. Cough, 4. Fever,
 5. Lotus, 6. Orchid, 7. Lilac.
 II. 1. Iris, 2. Rose, 3. Daisy, 4. Lupin,
 Drumsuck.
 5. Gourd, 6. Potato, 7. Onion, 8.
 I 1. Peach, 2. Turnip, 3. Bean, 4. Radish
Hidden words

ANSWERS

N.S. Rajan



Classroom Cameos from Canada



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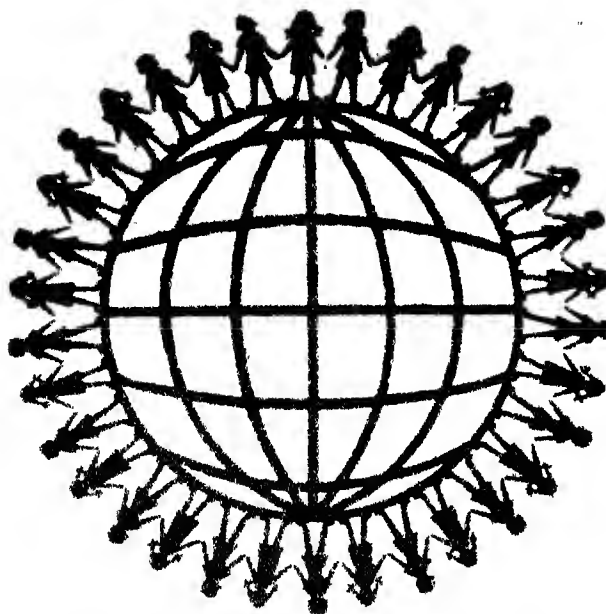
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CHILDREN'S World

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SHANKAR

Assistant Editor
K. RAMAKRISHNAN

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Cover: "Flying Kites" by Biswajit Das (9) India

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YES

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(TO BE CONTINUED)

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2. Each entry should be accompanied by a certificate from the parent/guardian or teacher that it is the original and unaided work of the Competitor done in 1977.
3. Each entry should carry the following details and these must be written in BLOCK LETTERS and in ENGLISH, on the back of the Painting or at the end of the Essay.
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 - ii) Full address
 - iii) Date of Birth
 - iv) Nationality
 - v) Whether boy or girl
4. Entries should be addressed to:
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CHILDREN'S WORLD
Nehru House
4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi 110002
India.
5. Entries should reach the above address on or before August 31, 1977.
6. Entries will not be returned.
7. The Painting should depict/The essay should describe *at least one aspect of INDO-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP.*
8. The Painting (minimum size 30cm x 40cm or 12"x16") may be done in any media except black lead pencil. The Painting should be unmounted. The essay (maximum words 1,000) may either be written in a legible hand or typewritten. Only writings in ENGLISH will be considered.
9. A Competitor may submit only ONE Painting and/or essay.
10. The Jury's decision will be final.
11. The names of the Prizewinners will be announced in the NOVEMBER 1977 issue of this magazine, and the prize distribution is likely to be held in New Delhi in November 1977.
12. PRIZES:
There will be a First, Second and Third prize each for the four age groups 8-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-16. Prizes will be in the form of reproduction of well-known paintings, books, and dolls. There will also be several consolation prizes.
13. No competitor will be awarded more than ONE Prize.
14. The copyright of all entries will rest with the CHILDREN'S WORLD.

CLOSING DATE : AUGUST 31, 1977

THE BATTLE OF THE BALANCED DIET



IT WAS a cold winter's day. Gopal lay snuggled in bed with a blanket over him. He had just returned from school. His mother always prepared his lunch and kept it on the dining table, ready to be eaten, before she herself went to work. Thus, he used to eat his lunch alone. His father and mother came back from work late in the evening.

Gopal loved these afternoon hours, all by himself.

Today, after eating his lunch, he lay down for a brief nap. He thought of all the things he had learnt at school; he remembered his friends and playmates. Soon he was fast asleep.

Suddenly, he was awakened by a strange noise. He thought he heard the shuffling of little feet all around him.

Gopal blinked and rubbed his eyes open. He peered around him in wonder. He blinked again.

'I must be dreaming,' he thought. Or did he really see the basket moving in the corner? Indeed, the lid of the vegetable basket popped out and went rolling across the floor. Frantic sounds were heard from the basket, and out came the vegetables one after the other.

"How dare you insult me!" cried the Potato scrambling down first. "I am the most important here! I contain carbohydrates and starch. But for me, Gopal would have no energy. I make the sugar he needs; ask Gopal, he loves me like anything!"

"Tommy-rot!" cried the purple Brinjal, who had by then landed on the floor with a thud. "I am the most important vegetable. I give iron which purifies the blood. Gopal loves me in all his curries!"

"Stuff and nonsense!" snapped the carrot. "I am the best! I give vitamin A and it makes Gopal's hair and skin so smooth and shining. Have you seen his eyes? They're sparkling. He has a sharp eyesight—all because of me! I am the best!"

"Poof! What high-sounding talk!" said the luscious red Tomato wiping her dark red shirt. "I'm the best. Gopal can eat me cooked

or raw! I am sweet, too! I give him vitamin C. I am the best, as well as the prettiest, whatever you may say!"

"Bah!" said the Drumstick, hopping down the basket in a single leap on his long stilt-like leg. "I am the best. Any doctor will tell you. I am as good as meat! I taste delicious in 'sambar'. Ask any south Indian, he will tell you! I am the best!"

"What a racket, and all for nothing!" said the roly-poly Cabbage, quite out of breath. "It is ridiculous to fight. I and my cousin Cauliflower are about the best, though I don't know what I'm made of!"

"Indeed, well-spoken!" interrupted the Cauliflower rolling over and over like a ball. "We're part of almost all curries! We taste so nice that people eagerly wait for our arrival in the market!"

"Tut! Tut!" said the Spinach. "I don't have to repeat how important I am. I supply calcium and phosphorus to the body! Ah! It's so simple to cook me! Ask Gopal's mother, she never returns from the market without me!"

"Goodness!" cried the tiny Pea. "Does anyone know I am made of protein? I rebuild worn-out tissues. Perhaps nobody here will understand what that means! Anyway I am the best!"

The Chilli was very angry. He cried, "Where would you all be without me? I make food tasty! I contain vitamin D, too. Therefore, I am the best!"

"My! My!" said the Onion. "Now that's a little too much! In fact, I add flavour to food. I taste lovely when I'm eaten raw. Now, didn't someone say, an Onion a day keeps the doctor away? That reminds me—I, too, contain iron! Besides, I smell so nice—nobody can smell any of you. Naturally, I am the best!"

"No, I am!"

"No, I am!"

"I am! I am!"

There was a veritable battle in the corner. They were shouting, throwing out their arms in defiant gestures, and kicking as well.

The noise was too much for Gopal. He sat up. "What's going on here?" he asked.

"There! There!" cried everyone. "Gopal is awake! He is a wise boy and he goes to school. He must have read all about us. Let's

ask him. He will settle our quarrel." So, they asked him which of them was the best.

Gopal looked at all of them. "Well", he said, "to stay strong and healthy, I need to eat all of you. So all of you are equally important to me! Why do you quarrel?"

"A good, balanced diet for me means I have to drink milk, eat rice, dal, wheat, vegetables, meat, eggs, butter, and fruits. So, go back to your basket, all of you, and let me sleep for a while before Mummy comes home!"

The vegetables scrambled back to the basket quite happy and satisfied. Hadn't Gopal said that all of them were equally important?

The battle of the Balanced Diet was over. And all of them had won!

Prema Ramakrishnan

SPAGHETTI—CHICKEN

The red-haired young butcher of Harrow
Went selling his meat in a barrow,
He said it was 'chicken' in order to
quicken

His sales which had proved to be narrow.
But soon an old man from the city,
Who was known to be clever and witty,
Exclaimed, 'What a shame! I've seen
through the game,

That's certainly not chicken but
spaghetti!

So the buyers looked closely and doubted,
And some shook their fists as they shouted,
'The butcher's a fraud, let's take him
abroad

And teach him how spaghetti is
sprouted.'

But the butcher, he stuck to his word,
And he said it was terribly absurd
To think that his meat was made up of

wheat,
When it was plainly the flesh of a bird.
Still no one would look into the barrow,
No, not a single good citizen of Harrow,
So the butcher, he quit and finally
admitted

He'd been selling the meat of a sparrow!

Saibal Chatterjee

A MOTHER'S ADVICE



LONG, long ago, there was a dense forest near Indraprastha where all types of wild animals lived. A herd of goats used to graze in the pasture nearby.

One day, a naughty young goat picked a quarrel with her mother and skipped away into the forest just to tease her. Soon, she got lost behind the thickets. When she could not find her way back for quite some time, she became nervous. She climbed a ridge to look for her fold. Suddenly, she spotted a jackal who was looking greedily at her.

"O my pretty sister, you look lost in the forest. Come down, and I will show you the way to your mates," he said.

The goat was very frightened, but she soon remembered what her mother used to tell her very often—"Never lose your presence of mind." So, she put on a brave face and said, "O you wicked creature! How dare you disturb me? Don't you see I am eating stones? I haven't had a lion to eat for several days! Thank heavens you have come! I have been dying of hunger."

The jackal thought that she was a witch in the form of a goat and would surely kill him. So, he took to his heels in utter despair.

The goat had hardly heaved a sigh of relief when she saw new danger. A bear was fast approaching her from below the ridge. She had to act immediately.

"Hurry up, you dirty thing! Why didn't you come sooner? Can't you see I am dying of hunger? A whole jackal could not satisfy my appetite. I need a couple more lions. But for the time being, you will do," she shouted at the top of her voice.

The bear was greatly puzzled. He could clearly see the footprints of a jackal on the ground. Fear overtook him. He turned

back, rolled down the slope, and quickly disappeared into the forest.

By this time the jackal had reached the lion's den. In a voice trembling with fear, he said, "O king of the forest, our valiant lord! A great curse has befallen us all. A goat has turned lion-eater. She is roaming about in this forest in search of animals. She says she will not be satisfied unless she has eaten a couple of lions. Save yourself please, sir."

"A lion-eating goat! What a fine discovery! Are you in your senses, Mr. Jackal?" the lion asked.

In a low whisper, the jackal said, "Believe me, sir, I myself saw her eating stones. But for god Almighty, she would have killed me."

The lion was unwilling to believe it unless he had seen the goat himself. So, he asked the jackal to lead him to her.

Midway in the forest, they met the bear who was running from the goat in panic. The lion stopped him. "My dear Mr. Bear, what is the matter? You look badly shaken. Can I be of any help to you?"

"For god's sake, please run. A witch of a goat is in search of you. I could hardly escape myself. She is coming this very way. Please run and hide yourself!" So saying, the bear disappeared into the forest.

The lion really got unnerved, but he would not give in easily. "I will have an audience with her, whoever she be. Come along, Mr. Jackal."

The jackal was now reluctant to go with the lion. He threatened the jackal, and when he saw sure death either way, he agreed to continue to accompany the lion.

It was now past noon. The goat saw them approaching at a distance. It was real danger this time. But she was not to be beaten. Her mother's words echoed in her ears. 'Never lose heart.' She addressed the jackal in an angry tone: "O deceitful jackal! You had promised to bring me half-a-dozen lions, and here you come with this famished thing! How will he satisfy my

hunger? I am sure you have been wasting your time. I will not spare you now."

The lion was now convinced that she was a witch. His first thought was to save his own life, so he turned back, roared fiercely, and dashed away into the forest.

The jackal, too, without wasting a moment took the opposite direction.

The goat was in a sportive mood. She ran after the jackal as if to frighten him. In no time, this chase also brought her out of the forest. And lo! she saw the herd she had left grazing at a distance.

Suddenly she stopped, composed herself and, looking about here and there, moved slowly towards her mates as if nothing had happened.

*(A Rajasthani Folk Tale
Retold by Adarsh Saksena)*

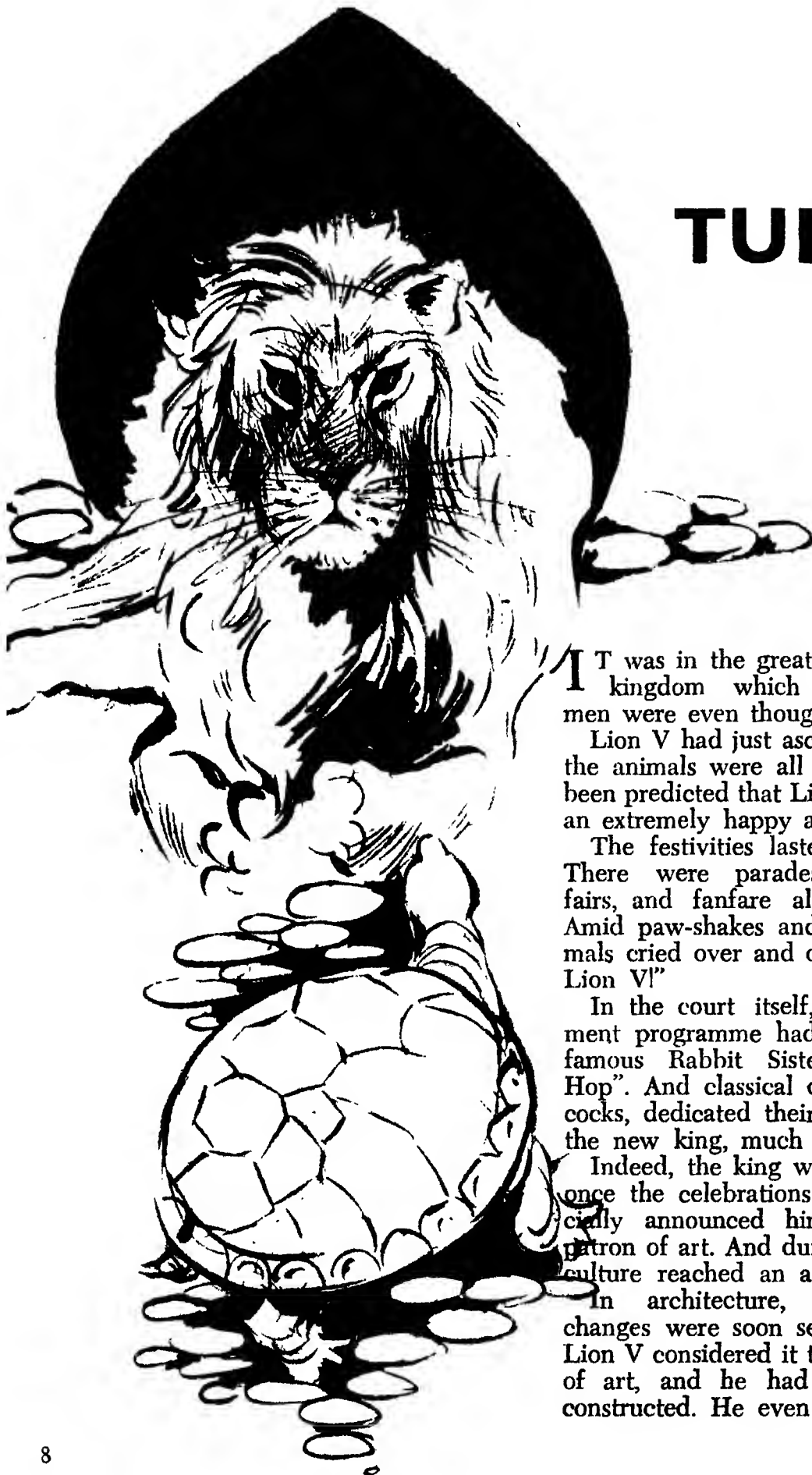
MUMMY—ME

Drink, drink, what shall I drink?
Do, do, what shall I do?
Go, go, where shall I go?
Learn, learn, what shall I learn?
Eat, eat, what shall I eat?
Play, play, with whom shall I play?
Pray, pray, how shall I pray?
Sleep, sleep, when shall I sleep,
My sweet, sweet Mummy?

Drink, drink, drink your milk.
Do, do, do your work.
Go, go, go to your school.
Learn, learn, learn your lessons.
Eat, eat, eat your food.
Play, play, play with your friends.
Pray, pray, pray with your heart.
Sleep, sleep, sleep in the night,
My little darling, Vidyullatha!

*Vidyullatha N. Nagar (6)
India*

THE TURTLE'S DOME



IT was in the great animal kingdom—the kingdom which existed long before men were even thought of.....

Lion V had just ascended the throne and the animals were all rejoicing. For, it had been predicted that Lion V's reign would be an extremely happy and prosperous one.

The festivities lasted three whole days. There were parades, loud trumpeting, fairs, and fanfare all over the kingdom. Amid paw-shakes and bear-hugs, the animals cried over and over again, "Long live Lion VI"

In the court itself, a special entertainment programme had been arranged. The famous Rabbit Sisters did the "Bunny Hop". And classical dancers, like the Peacocks, dedicated their graceful dances to the new king, much to his delight.

Indeed, the king was a lover of art, and once the celebrations were over, he officially announced himself as the highest patron of art. And during his reign, art and culture reached an all-time peak.

In architecture, especially, dramatic changes were soon seen in the kingdom. Lion V considered it to be the highest form of art, and he had many new buildings constructed. He even had a new palace

built. And Turtle had the honour of earning the coveted title, 'The King's Architect'.

Turtle perfected the dome and discovered the use of arches. Almost all the buildings Turtle designed had domes for roofs. There were half domes and full domes, pointed domes and bulbous domes. And, of course, the biggest and finest dome was that of the king's palace.

All the animals admired the newly constructed buildings, especially their domes. Turtle himself was so proud of them that he just couldn't stop talking about them. "The dome", Turtle said, "as perfected by me, is the culmination of architecture as a form of art."

At first the animals agreed with Turtle. But when they found that Turtle couldn't stop boasting, they began to find flaws. "What is in a dome?" they said. "After all, even the primitive caves were dome-like structures!"

News of Turtle's vanity reached the king's ears. But Lion V felt it was best to ignore it, as it certainly wasn't empty boasting.

And unchecked, Turtle's self-importance just grew and grew. Every time he had to go anywhere, he sent messengers ahead, who would announce, "Make way for the King's Architect!" It was as if Turtle expected to be surrounded by cheering crowds wherever he went!

And yet Lion V ignored it.

Till, one day, when Turtle started bragging to Lion V himself. "Sire," Turtle said, "this era will go down in history, if not for anything else, at least for my architecture, especially my domes."

Lion V was furious. This was more than he could take. "I've tolerated enough of your boasting," he said. "You're so proud of your domes; from now on you can carry your famous dome on your back. Let's see how far you can go with it!"

...and to this day, turtles plod along carrying their dome-like homes on their back. And they don't go very far with it!

—Viswajita Das

THE STORY OF MERMAIDS

SITA was reading out a fairy tale entitled 'The Little Mermaid' to her younger brother, Raju. "..... Her body ended in a long, graceful tail because, like her sisters, she was a mermaid...."

"Have you ever seen a mermaid, Didi?" interrupted Raju.

"No, I haven't," she replied sadly, "only some lucky sailors have seen them."

"I will become a sailor and go to sea. I shall then bring a mermaid home. She will swim in the pond and sing for us," Raju thought aloud.

Sita continued her story. By the time she finished it, Raju was fast asleep.

"Do mermaids really exist?" thought Sita. That night mermaids haunted her in her dreams.

The next day she asked her teachers about mermaids. Their answers did not satisfy her. Her Science teacher suggested that they were either imaginary creatures or some aquatic animals that people had mistaken for mermaids.

Sita spent most of her time in the library; she was determined to find out the truth about mermaids. But nowhere could she find them mentioned.

One day, she opened a small, old tattered book and, to her surprise, it contained an article on Mermaids. She read it again and again. "The fish-tailed, beautiful human forms sitting on rocks and singing sweetly—that is, the mermaids did really exist. The ugly broad-nosed, blunt-faced, comical creature—The siren was the mermaid 'Incredible'. The sailors who saw Manatee or Dugong (two different types of sirens) raising their head and shoulders out of the water, or the mother holding her baby to her breasts, or some of them drawing seaweeds towards themselves, might have brought home the story of mermaids. Columbus, who saw three mermaids, said that they were not so beautiful as they were painted. They resembled human faces to some extent."

"Eureka!" Sita cried aloud, "the mermaids are the allies of the SEA COW!"

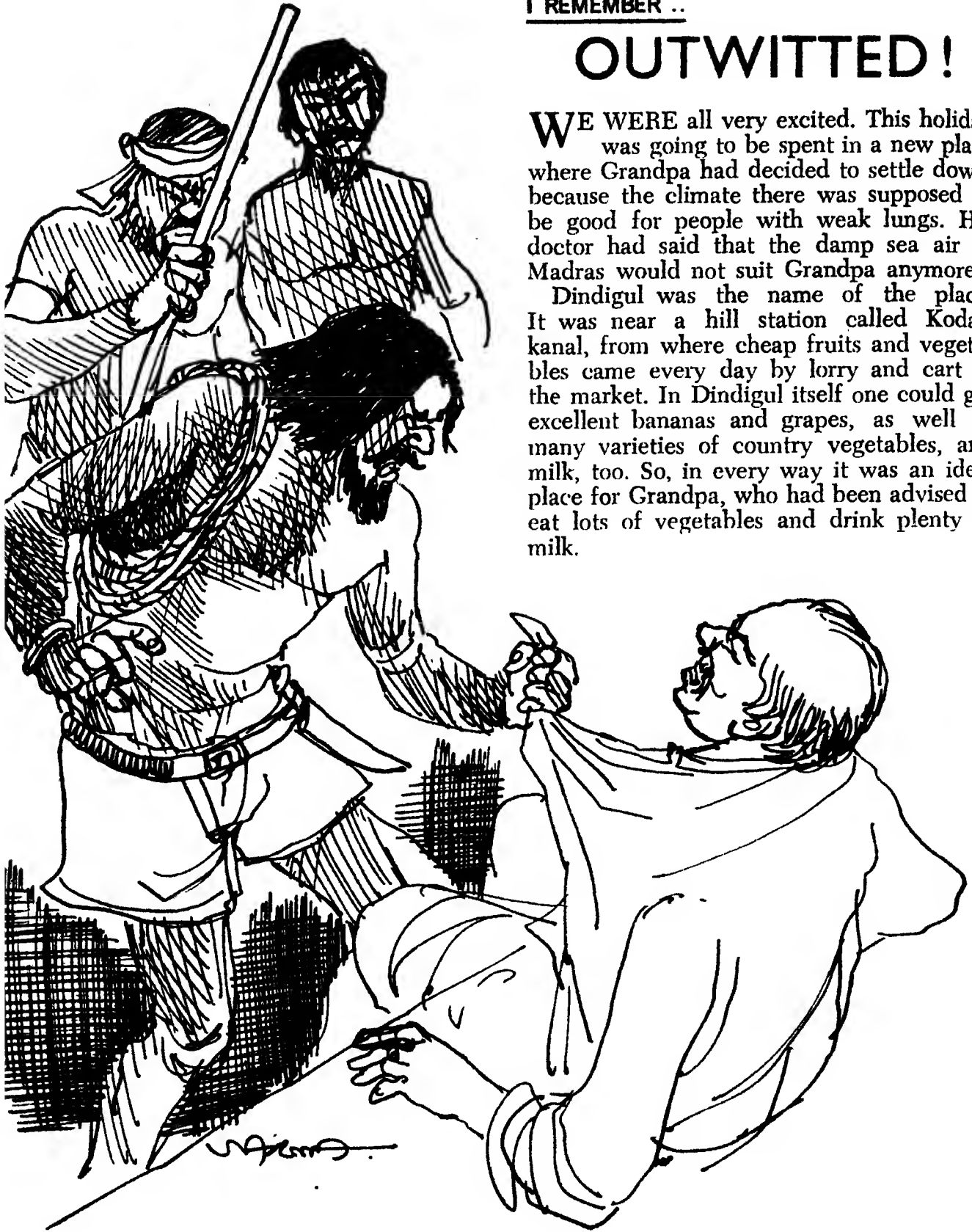
Mithu Roy
India

I REMEMBER ..

OUTWITTED!

WE WERE all very excited. This holiday was going to be spent in a new place where Grandpa had decided to settle down, because the climate there was supposed to be good for people with weak lungs. His doctor had said that the damp sea air of Madras would not suit Grandpa anymore.

Dindigul was the name of the place. It was near a hill station called Kodai-kanal, from where cheap fruits and vegetables came every day by lorry and cart to the market. In Dindigul itself one could get excellent bananas and grapes, as well as many varieties of country vegetables, and milk, too. So, in every way it was an ideal place for Grandpa, who had been advised to eat lots of vegetables and drink plenty of milk.



The house was an old fashioned one with many rooms, a large garden, a cowshed, and a well. Granny, who had lived in villages, had decided to keep a cow, and said she would show us how to draw water from the well.

"I will teach you how to milk a cow, too," she said and laughed.

Our neighbours told us to be very careful at night, to fasten all our doors and windows, because a gang of burglars had been said to be on the prowl for some time. The police had not been able to catch them as yet, though they had tried ever so hard.

The doors and windows in our house had heavy iron bolts and bars. In one room, there was an iron safe built into the wall, and the family jewels and money were kept in this.

"How can any burglar break open this safe?" Grandpa asked.

One night, when we were fast asleep, the burglars came! They were not ordinary thieves. They came armed with knives and clubs. They did not try to open the doors or windows. Instead, they made a big hole in the wall, and got into the house through it!

Though our neighbours had told us to close all the doors and windows leading to each room, and not to sleep in the outer rooms, Grandpa had not followed their advice and so the burglars were able to go straight into his room.

The leader, a huge dark man, with long black hair pulled Grandpa out of his bed and asked him where the jewels and money were kept. Grandpa refused to answer. One of the men stabbed him and he fell to the ground, bleeding.

"Come, I will show you," said Granny coolly.

My father came in just then and tried to attack one of the thieves. Granny pushed him away.

"Keep quiet," she said. "It is no use. They will stab or kill you. Look after your father."

She then took them into the room where the safe was and gave them the keys.

"Take whatever you want, only don't hurt any of us," she said.

The robbers wanted the ornaments she

was wearing and my mother's, too. Both of them were allowed to keep their wedding necklace.

"All right, now go outside!" she was told.

My grandmother was a clever lady. The robbers were so busy opening the safe and admiring the jewels that they did not notice that when she went out, she not only closed the door (which was only a single heavy wooden panel), but bolted it from outside! There was no other way of getting out, and the door could not be broken open easily.

Inside the room, the men were yelling, cursing, and beating the door. Granny laughed and said to my father, "Run and call the police and a doctor, quick! Children, you go to the front room and shout for the neighbours. Tell them we have caught the thieves."

We were crying and shivering with fright.

Granny said, "They can't do anything to you now. Be brave and do what I have told you."

In those days there were no telephones in our area. Father went by car to the police station. Our neighbours, hearing all the noise, came rushing to our house.

Granny and my mother washed and bandaged Grandpa's wound which was a rather deep one. It was the first time I had seen so much blood, and I felt sick and dizzy.

Soon the police came and the doctor, too. The robbers were handcuffed and taken away. Everyone was happy that this gang, who had so terrorised our town and the surrounding villages, had at last been caught.

"Just imagine an old lady catching them!" they kept on saying. "Even the police could not do that!"

Granny was rewarded in cash. She gave the money to the hospital where Grandpa had been admitted. He was there for a month and came out with a big scar, of which he was very proud.

He used to tell people that he got it defending us against the robbers! Granny knew better, but she kept quiet and would laugh afterwards.

Tara Parameswaran

(Courtesy: Writers' Workshop)

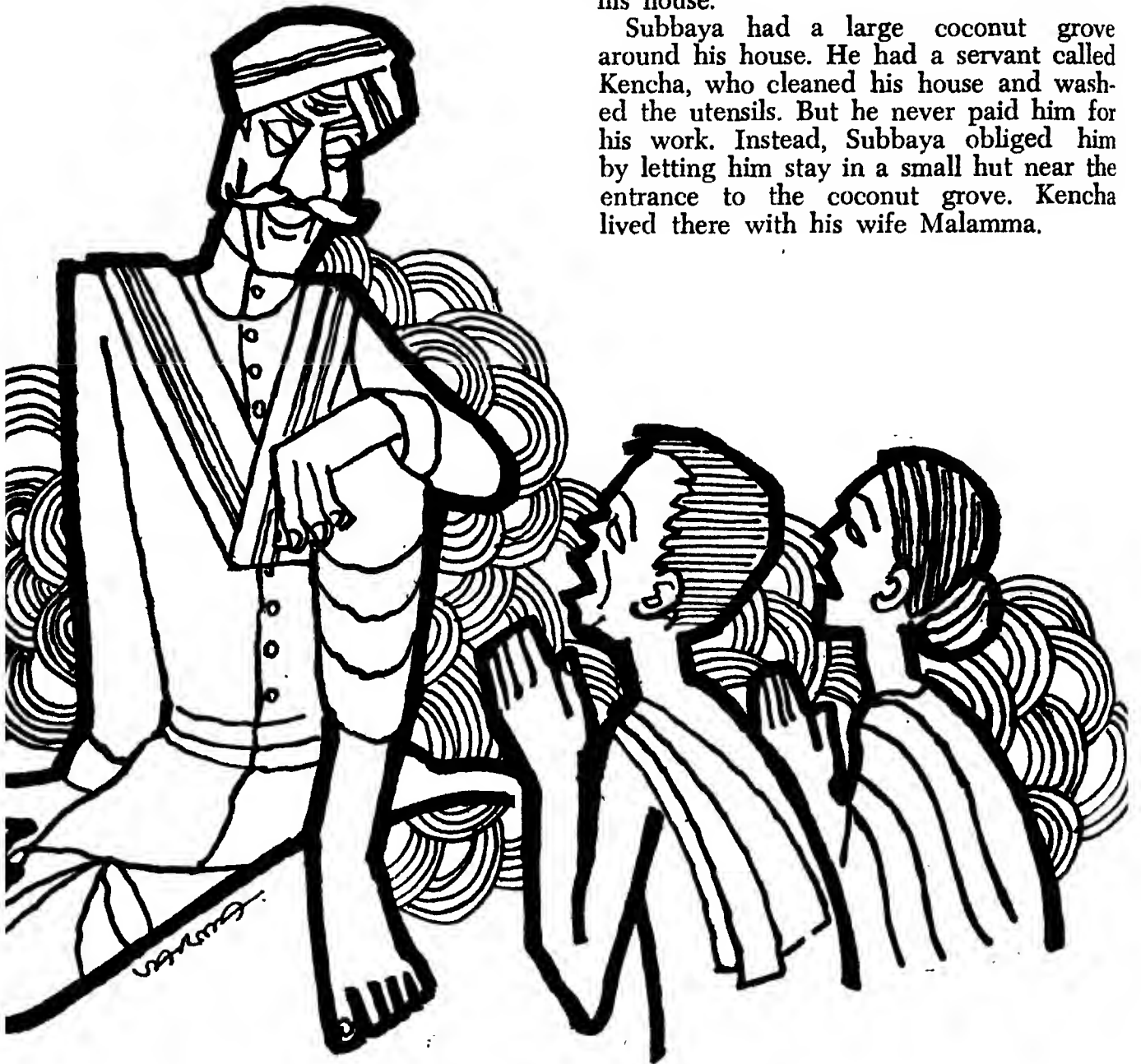
SUBBAYA THE MISER

THERE once lived a wealthy landlord named Subbaya in a small village near Belgaum. He lived all by himself as he had no family. He had vast fields, and the crops fetched him a very good income. And, yet, he was very, very careful about every paisa that he spent. In fact, he had amassed such a lot of wealth that he started lending money at a high rate of interest.

And the shopkeepers of his village were always in need of money.

Every morning, the miserly landlord religiously went to his debtors to collect the interest. He would return home in the afternoon after his rounds. And being a real miser, he kept no cook. He cooked his own meals, and that, too, was a simple affair, since he never invited any guests to his house.

Subbaya had a large coconut grove around his house. He had a servant called Kencha, who cleaned his house and washed the utensils. But he never paid him for his work. Instead, Subbaya obliged him by letting him stay in a small hut near the entrance to the coconut grove. Kencha lived there with his wife Malamma.



Subbaya was a strict vegetarian. That was mainly because it meant spending less money on food! However, Kencha and his wife loved fish with their rice. But they did not want their landlord to know that they cooked fish, because they thought he did not like the smell of fish. And so, Malamma would wait till he went on his rounds in the morning, to the village, and then cooked their meals.

One day, Subbaya finished his rounds earlier than usual and he was on his way back home, long before noon. When he neared Malamma's hut, he got the smell of frying fish. The appetising smell made his mouth water.

He went home and summoned Kencha. The poor man was trembling with fear and cursed his wife for cooking so late, for he was sure that they would now be driven away. When he reached his master's house, Subbaya asked him, "Kench, what was it that your wife was cooking a little while ago?"

Kench bowed his head humbly and confessed, "She was cooking fish!"

"Oh, I see," Subbaya said. "Go back to your wife and tell her that she must cook fish everyday, at the same time that I have my lunch."

Kench was surprised at the strange orders, but he went back to his wife and gave her the instructions. She thought that the old man had gone a bit crazy.

From that day onwards, at lunch-time Malamma fried a few pieces of dried fish to eat with their rice. Though they enjoyed their meals every day, they could not afford it. So, they both decided to meet their landlord and tell him their problem. With folded hands, Kencha pleaded, "Master, the fish costs us about ten paise every day, and we cannot afford it."

Subbaya sat thoughtfully for some time. Then he got up and, asking them to wait, went inside his room and shut the door. From his cupboard he took out some silver coins and started dropping them on the floor. Kencha and his wife could hear the jingle of the coins dropping. They heard the ringing sound thirty times and were delighted.

The door then opened and Subbaya

came out and settled down on his cot again. He looked up and asked them to go back to their house.

Kench was a little hesitant to go back, especially after he had heard the jingle of the coins. But Subbaya only smiled and said, "You gave me the pleasure of smelling fried fish while I had my meals, though I did not eat it. In the same way I have, on my part, given you the pleasure of hearing silver coins dropping on the floor. So, now, you may go home."

Kench and his wife could find no words for such worldly thoughts and silently prayed that they would never become misers in their life!

(A Karnataka Folk Tale Retold by Pinkie)

If Only Danny Could Talk

IF ONLY Danny could talk, he would be priceless. He would become famous. His picture would be on the first page of all newspapers, and writers would be writing big and small articles about him, which would be published in magazines and newspapers. Our house would be swarming with reporters and photographers. The TV people would give a programme or two on him. Ah! it would be lovely if only Danny could talk.

If Danny could talk, he would be the most obedient and well-mannered dog in the world. He would tell us what he thinks of the dog nextdoor. He would be able to understand why he was beaten; why he could not eat with us on the table and sleep with us on the bed. He would tell Mama when my brother and I tied up his tail with his leg, which got us a good hard spanking. He would tell us when he wanted his food, or whether he would like a change in his diet. If only he could talk, he could receive phone calls when we would be away, and give us the message when we returned. Above all, he would be good company and tell us doggy stories when we got bored. We could celebrate his birthday and he would get lots and lots of presents, like a big juicy bone or a bottle of milk, which we could teach him to open.

*Natasha (12)
India*

FAMOUS ECCENTRICS-4



A BESPECTACLED and moustached young man sat among a group of children in a nursery, writing comic verses. As he found the rhyme he sought, his features broke into a smile. He read the lines to the delight of the children and then illustrated them.

Thus, about the year 1832, at the home of the Earl of Derby, Knowsley Hall, near Liverpool, England, was born the 'Book of Nonsense', the first of the many which made Edward Lear the world's greatest writer of 'nonsense' verse and stories.

Lear (1812-1888) had gone to Knowsley to draw the animals and birds in Lord Derby's private zoo. He soon became a friend of the Earl's family. He seemed to establish an understanding with the animals, and talked to them while he drew their pictures.

Born in London, Lear had begun to earn money as an artist when he was only a teenaged boy. He sat, every day for a year, in the parrot house in London's zoo and produced a magnificent volume of paintings. He was then only 20 years old.



FOR the sake of his health, Lear went to live in the kinder climate of Europe. The splendid scenery that he saw there inspired some fine landscape paintings. Back in England, he published the verses he had written and illustrated at Knowsley as a 'Book of Nonsense'.

The rhymes and sketches highly amused children — and adults — all over Britain. The book was dedicated to Lord Derby's grandchildren, and word went round that it was the Earl himself who wrote it. After all, his own name was Edward and 'Lear' was 'Earl' rearranged!

During a train journey, Lear overheard an elderly gentleman declare, "No such person as Edward Lear exists." Upon which the no-such-person jumped up from his seat, crying, "I am Edward Lear!" As evidence, he showed the name clearly printed inside his hat.

Lear grew a bushy beard, into which he would chuckle as he sat writing his ludicrous rhymes. They were, as he asserted, "nonsense, pure and absolute." But it was the divine nonsense of a genius. He set some of the verses to music and sang them for his friends.

EDWARD LEAR



HE HAD a fertile, unbounded fancy. Who but Lear could have dreamed up such impossible, funny characters as the 'Dong with a luminous nose' who fell in love with a 'Jumbly Girl', or 'The Owl' and the 'Pussy Cat' in their 'Pea-green boat'?

Lear's paintings were admired by Queen Victoria who, when she was 27, took lessons from him first at Osborne House and later at Buckingham Palace. She noted in her diary that Lear "teaches remarkably well, in landscape painting, in water colours."

Lear went on painting expeditions — sometimes

afoot, sometimes on horse or donkey — in Europe, Arabia, Palestine, India, and Ceylon. Always behind him was his faithful servant for 30 years, the Greek Giorgio.

He was so devoted to his cat, Foss, that he looked on it almost as a human being. When he built a new villa at San Remo in Italy, he had it planned exactly like his previous home. Otherwise, he wryly explained to a friend, Foss might not have approved!



THERE are hilarious references to and funny drawings of Foss in Lear's books. When the cat died, he solemnly and sadly buried it in the garden at the villa, and put up a headstone in its memory, recording its age as 31.

Lear's visit to India was at the invitation of the Viceroy, his friend Lord Northbrook. He travelled throughout the country. While in the Himalayas, he would be up before dawn, sitting wrapped in blankets, ready to paint the sunrise.

An incident at Allahabad gave him great

emotional pleasure. A little girl, seeing him drawing an owl for another child, asked him to do a cat, too, and recited his rhyme, "The Owl and the Pussy Cat," which she had learned at school!

Lear is principally remembered for his 'nonsense' rhymes and stories and his comic sketches. But the eccentric artist was undoubtedly among the leading landscape painters of his day, combining bold treatment with accurate detail.

(Courtesy: BIS)

The Prime Minister of Hastinapur



AFTER Pandu and Dhritarashtra were born, Satyawati asked sage Vyasa to go to her daughter-in-law, Ambika, once again.

Ambika, however, could not think of Vyasa without horror because of his dark complexion. So, she sent her maid to the sage that night. The maid served him food and met all his wishes.

In the morning, Vyasa went back to Satyawati and said, "Mother, a son will be born, and he will be the incarnation of Lord Dharma."

Satyavati was very pleased.

"But", Vyasa, continued after a pause, the mother of this child will not be your daughter-in-law. She sent me her maid last night, and it is the good fortune of this maid to bear the best among my children. So the child will be born to this maid."

Thus a third son was born to Vyasa. He was named Vidura. In course of time when Dhritarashtra became the king of Hastinapur and Pandu the commander of the army, Vidura was made the Prime Minister to the king. And while Pandu married Kunti and Madhuri, and Dhritarashtra married Gandhari, Vidura did not marry at all. He remained a 'Brahmachari' throughout his life.

When Pandu died, his sons, the Pandavas, were brought to Hastinapur. It was here that Duryodhana, the eldest son of Dhritarashtra, once tried to kill one of the Pandavas, Bheema, by throwing him into the river Ganga, when he was lying unconscious. Vidura, at that time, went to Kunti and cautioned her that Duryodhana's hatred for the Pandavas had begun. Vidura was the protector of his nephews, the Pandavas. It was he who saved them from the house of lac, by arranging for a tunnel to be built beneath, through which they escaped when Purochana set fire to the Pandava abode. This tunnel led to the river Ganga.

The Pandavas soon reached the Ganga but they could not cross the river, as it was night and there was no boatman. But, suddenly, a man appeared before them and said, "My Lords, I have a boat. I can take you across the river to the forest on the other side. I have been sent by Vidura."

The Pandavas prayed for Vidura, because he had saved their lives once again.

Vidura always took the side of the Pandavas. When Sakuni, uncle of Duryodhana and Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandavas, were playing dice, Vidura went to Dhritarashtra and pleaded with him to stop the game as it would lead to the destruction of them all. As Vidura was saying this, Yudhishtira lost the game, and he and his brothers had to go into exile.

While the Pandavas were in exile, there was talk of war in Hastinapur. Vidura advised Duryodhana and his brothers to give the kingdom back to the Pandavas. But nobody listened to him. Duryodhana replied

that he would not give even a needle spot to the Pandavas.

When war actually started between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, Vidura did not take part in it. He remained only a spectator.

After the war, one day, when he was sitting under the famous Sami tree, he suddenly disappeared into the body of Yudhishtira. They were 'brothers' because they had both been born of Lord Dharma. He did so because he wanted to transfer all the knowledge he had acquired to his brother. He himself went to heaven. The gods blessed Vidura for his great deeds. He was rewarded for his efforts for peace. And he joined the company of the gods forever.

*Pranav Khullar (15)
India*

AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENT

IT ALL happened on a December evening 6 years ago. At that time, the Indo-Pakistan war was going on and we were in Chandigarh. The sun had set and it was quite pleasant. We thought we would better finish our dinner and then gossip for some time before retiring for the night. But, suddenly, we heard noises: "Batti Bandh Karo!" (Switch off the lights.) We hurriedly put down our plates and quickly switched off all the lights. We had not even finished our dinner, but we couldn't help it. We ran down the stairs as quickly as possible and jumped into the trenches which had been dug the day before. Inside the trenches we shut our ears and lay flat. And so this was WAR! I began thinking. In the trenches we were scared, as well as anxious to know what was happening. We tried to peep out of the trenches. Lo and behold! We saw approaching aircraft. Warplanes? We were nearly scared to death. We thought why should the Pakistanis fight with us though we are all brothers and sisters. This thought came back to our minds again and again.

The war continued for many days. And, surely, this war was the most unforgettable event in my life.

*Nirmala Sankaran (11)
India*

VIJAY MERCHANT

— India's Ace Batsman —

THE NAME of Vijay Merchant will forever occupy a splendid and solitary niche in the annals of Indian cricket, for a finer batsman, a more thorough sportsman, a more diligent and knowledgeable administrator, or a keener and more passionate lover of the game has never walked this earth. The place that Merchant holds in the affections of the Indian cricketing public is unique, and can never be supplanted or rivalled. It can be said of Merchant, if it can be said of any cricketer at all, that he gave back more to the game than he ever took from it.

Vijay Merchant first saw the light of day in Bombay on the 12th of October 1911. Rusi Mody tells us that he was never coached: the boy picked up the game by himself and represented both his school and college with distinction. He achieved his breakthrough in big time cricket with an appearance for the Hindus in the Bombay Quadrangular at the age of 18, and after that never looked back again.

Invited to tour England with the first Test team in 1932, the 21-year-old Merchant toed the line of his mentor L.P. Jai and declined on political grounds, holding that he could not share the pleasures of the game with a country that had subjugated his people and put their beloved leaders behind bars. He revised his opinion, however, when the M.C.C. toured India in 1933-34 and lost no time in establishing himself as India's best-equipped batsman. His promise for the time being was more potential than actual, his scores being 23, 30; 54, 17; 26, 28. The English captain Douglas Jardine, however, had no doubts about him: asked who had impressed him the most among the Indians, he pointed to Merchant.

The 1936 tour of England was an unmitigated disaster, the only saving grace being the batsmanship of Merchant and, to a lesser extent, that of Mustaq Ali. C.K. Nayudu's matchless credentials were overridden rough-shod, the captaincy going to the Maharaja of Vizianagram, an indifferent cricketer who failed miserably in his enforced task. The team split up into two 'camps', which engaged in open recriminations on and off the field, with the inevitable result that the quality of cricket suffered.

Even this disgusting atmosphere was not allowed to interfere with his main concern—getting runs for India. In the second innings of the second Test Match at Old Trafford, India trailed behind by 368 runs, but started in the most astonishing manner. In 80 minutes, the Indian opening pair, Merchant and Mustaq, had put on 100 runs: in the next 70 minutes, they took their stand to 203 when Mustaq was dismissed for a swashbuckling 112. Merchant hit 114 in 255 solid minutes, and India totalled 390-5, and the match petered out into a draw. In the last Test at the Oval, the pair again combined to put on 81 and 64 in the two innings—Merchant's contributions being 52 and 48. At the end of the series, he topped the aggregates with 282 runs at 47.00, but his best performance of the tour came in the match against Lancashire when he carried his bat through both innings, remaining not out with 135 (out of 271) and 77 (out of 161). WISDEN nominated him among the 'Five Cricketers of the Year' in recognition of his having headed the Indian tour averages with 1,745 runs at 51.32.

India's next Test was played only after World War, but the early 1940s served to bring many young cricketers

of great promise to the fore. One such was Vijay Hazare, who soon began to match Merchant's insatiable appetite for runs. A spirited rivalry developed between the two as records were made and broken in close succession. Merchant's first big score (243 not out) came in 1941. Hazare broke it with 248 in 1943. Two days later, Merchant retrieved the record with a splendid 259 not out against the Rest, only to see Hazare win it back with an even more stirring knock of 309 in 401 minutes a week later. Though Hazare won this Pentangular contest, Merchant had the last word with an unbeaten 359 against Maharashtra in the Ranji Trophy.

When the War clouds parted, India was the first country to tour England for three Test games. Merchant was led to believe that he could expect the captaincy for the tour, more so as he had won back a rubber against the Australian Services XI in this capacity. At the last moment, the senior Nawab of Patandi was given the post, but Vijay swallowed his acute disappointment and promised to extend all support in his position as vice-captain.

And Merchant kept his word. To safeguard the interests of the side, he undertook to play 30 of the 33 matches of the tour, though plagued by bad health occasionally. The cold must have troubled him a lot in one of the wettest English summers—only 17 uninterrupted days were possible throughout. He has since written that "more often than not when batting, I had a woollen underwear, a flannel shirt, two sweaters without sleeves, and to top it all, a pull-over with sleeves. I also wore, at all times, a woollen muffler. Inside the trousers I wore thigh pads and so when fully padded up I looked a real heavy-weight champion, more round than tall!" Actually, he lost 14 pounds, being a strict vegetarian and a complete teetotaler.

Prior to the Test games, Merchant's splendid 148 helped thrash the M.C.C. by an innings and 194 runs. He carried this form into the Test games, emerging as the highest scorer (245 runs) at the best average (49.00), with a fine 78 out of an all-out



Merchant (right) and Mustaq Ali go out to open India's innings at Manchester in 1936, where they made 203 runs before Mustaq was out for 112.

total of 170 at Manchester, where he and Mustaq put on 124 for the first wicket. A polished century fell to his lot in the next Test at the Oval, where he was run out by Denis Compton for 128, Compton kicking the ball onto the stumps and beating Vijay in the race for the crease. Against Lancashire, "he defied cold, bad light, rain storms which caused constant interruptions, and a wicket of different paces" to hit 111 not out (out of a total of 198-7) and 57 not out (out of a total of 107-6) in the two innings. All in all, he made 2,385 runs, with 7 hundreds at 74.52, standing second only to Wally Hammond in the season's averages.

Merchant was offered the captaincy of the Indian team to Australia and in the series against the West Indies, but on both occasions he had to decline on account of ill-health. His last Test was played at New Delhi against England in 1951-2 under the captaincy of Vijay Hazare. Merchant bade farewell with a knock of 154 (his Test

highest), helping his skipper add 211 runs in 310 minutes. In 10 Test Matches, all against England, Merchant scored 859 runs with 3 hundreds at an average of 47.72. Average-wise he stands second only to Sir Donald Bradman in first-class cricket, having hit 12,876 runs with 42 centuries (11 of which were double), at 72.75. In the Ranji Trophy matches he hit 3,639 runs at an average of 98.35—a record which may never be beaten.

Vijay Merchant raised batsmanship to a fine art. "Here was international quality unmistakable, batsmanship good enough to lay the foundations of any English or Australian innings—and lay it, not only soundly, but with method, wearing the dress of style." This was the incomparable Sir Neville Cardus's tribute to India's fore-

most batsman in 1936. That doyen of Indian Cricket Journalism, Berry Sarbadhikari, attributed to him—

"the ideal temperament, the soundness of technique, the fine equipment to face the new ball, the almost infallible power of ball-evaluation, the concentration, the patience, the adaptability to change his game to the needs of the hour and the wicket—ingredients to make a perfect opener, all rolled into one brilliant whole."

Vijay Merchant never retired from cricket: the two were forged together at birth by a tough bond, which we fervently pray will endure for many a fruitful day still.

Mahiyar D. Morawalla

Centenary Year for Wimbledon

WIMBLEDON is a hundred years old. That means it is only a few months younger to Test cricket, which celebrated its centenary earlier in the year (see *Children's World*, April 1977).

The tournament, winning which is the highest ambition any tennis player can have, has travelled a long way since 1877. The colour of the game has changed; its popularity tremendously increased and, of late, it has transformed itself into a great money-spinner.

The first ball in the first-ever Wimbledon tournament was served on the neatly mown grass of the Village Croquet Club at Worple Road on Monday, 9 July 1877. As many as 23 players had met at the place, about 16 km south-west of London. Exactly 10 days later, on 19 July, a village boy named Spencer Gore beat W.C. Marshall to claim the first Wimbledon singles title.

The women's singles and men's doubles were added to the tournament in 1884. Maud Watson was the first women's champion.

In 1921, King George V opened the

neighbouring all England's famous club on Church Road, as the Worple Road Croquet Club could no longer accommodate the increasing number of players after World War I.

William Tilden's was the first big name in Wimbledon. He won the championship in 1920 and 1921 and then again in 1930.

Britain's Fred Perry became the first player to score the hat-trick, winning the championship successively in 1934, 1935, and 1936.

Another great name in Tennis was that of American Donald Budge who, in 1938, became the first player to pull off the 'Grand Slam'—winning all the four major tournaments in one year—the Australian, the French Open, Wimbledon, and Forest Hills.

Charlotte 'Lottie' Dod still remains the youngest women's champ ever. When she pulled off the big event, she was still a school girl of 15.

Elizabeth Ryan holds the record for most wins at Wimbledon. She won her first title in 1914 when she was 20, and the 19th

in 1934 at the age of 40. These 19 titles comprised 12 doubles titles and 7 mixed doubles.

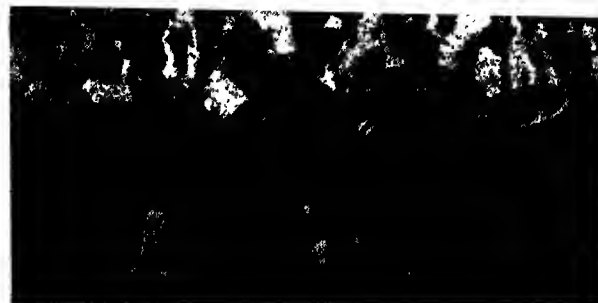
Perhaps, the greatest ever player seen at Wimbledon was Rod Laver, the 'Rockhampton Rocket'. He won the title in 1961, 1962, 1968, and 1969. What is more, he also claimed two 'Grand Slams', in 1962 and 1969.

Mrs. Billie Jean King, who dominated tennis in the first half of the seventies, was another all-time great.

Wimbledon, however, saw not only spectacular triumphs but tragedies as well. The greatest tragedy, perhaps, is that of Australian Ken Rosewall. This veteran reached the finals time and again, but never won it.

This year's tournament began on June 20 with Americans Jimmy Connors and Chris Evert topseeded. Connors was followed by defending champion Bjorn Borg of Sweden, Guillermo Vilas of Argentina, and Roscoe Tanner of the U.S.A. in that order. Following Chris Evert in ranking were Martina Navratilova (U.S.A.), Virginia Wade, and Sue Barker (both U.K.).

The men to make the semi-final grade in the centenary year were Bjorn Borg, Jimmy Connors, Vitas Gerulaitis (U.S.A.), and John McEnroe (U.S.A.). In the semi-final matches, Borg defeated Gerulaitis 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, 3-6, 8-6 in a three-and-a-quarter hour marathon, while Connors eliminated Mc-



Enroe (aged 18) 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4. In the epic final that followed, 21-year-old Borg won the cup of the centenary year beating the first seeded player 3-6, 6-2, 6-1, 5-7, 6-4 in a match where fortunes fluctuated almost every minute. (See picture above)

In the women's semi-finals, Virginia Wade toppled Chris Evert, the defending champion, 6-2, 4-6, 6-1, while Betty Stove of Netherlands beat Sue Barker 6-4, 2-6, 6-4. On July 1, 31-year-old Miss Wade became the first British woman to claim a Wimbledon singles title since 1969, when she beat 32-year-old Betty Stove, 4-6, 6-3, 6-1. (Picture at left)

The men's doubles was won by Ross Case and Geoff Masters, who beat John Alexander and Phil Dent 6-3, 6-4, 3-6, 8-9, 6-4 in an all-Australian final. While Mrs. Helen Cawley (Australia) and Jo Anne Russell (U.S.A.) won the women's doubles, the mixed doubles went to Greer Stevens and Bob Hewitt of South Africa.

One sensational find of this year's championship was the 14-year-old American girl Tracy Austin who, even in her defeat by the defending champion, Chris Evert, showed her class and held out high promises for the future.

The centenary tournament, a great success in all respects, provided a bitter pill to Betty Stove. She had the distinction of losing three finals—the women's singles, women's doubles, and mixed doubles!

With the increasing popularity of the Wimbledon, the money at stake has also gone up. Today, the men's champion bags £ 12,500, while the women's singles winner walks home richer by £ 10,000.

Wimbledon is not just a tournament; it is a festival, something which is enjoyed by millions of sports lovers all over the world.

Radhakrishnan



A HALLOWED GROUND

THIS ground was hallowed by the mingled blood of about two thousand and innocent Hindus, Sikhs, and Musalmans who were shot by the British bullets on 13th April, 1919." So runs an inscription at the Jallianwalla Bagh, Punjab's Gettysburg in the holy city of Amritsar.

It was Baisakhi—a sacred day for the Sikhs and Hindus—in fact a secular festival for all Muslims and non-Muslims including Punjabi Christians. A thousand odd turbaned Sikhs and Hindus, besides Muslims in 'Tahmids' had gathered at Amritsar in gay abandon to sing and dance. A 'mela' was to be held, as usual every year, on the outskirts of the city, but that year the climate was surcharged. People who had arrived from the neighbouring villages found Amritsar very different and cheerless. It looked as though the whole town was angry over the arrests of Gandhiji, Dr. Kitchlew, and Dr. Satyapal.

The Bagh is not really a bagh, but a 'Maidan', a treeless and waterless area where no birds sing. Nearly 20,000 people had gathered there for a public meeting and to listen to the speaker Hans Raj, who was explaining to the anxious crowd the implications of the arrests. While he was speaking, two files of soldiers rushed into the Bagh from the Jallianwalla Bazaar through a narrow lane. Among them were English soldiers as well. The sepoys knelt down and aimed their rifles at the crowd. In the twinkling of an eye, there was firing, cries and a melee. Hans Raj shouted from the dais asking his listeners not to panic. "Keep calm: they are only firing blanks."

When General Dyer, commanding the contingent, heard this, he shouted with equal force: "Fire down at them. Why are you firing high?"

It was about 5.30 in the evening. Although the firing continued for only 10 minutes, its reverberations in the neighbourhood were felt even after 10 hours. Eyewitnesses had affirmed that the firing was directed towards the gates through which

the people were running out. An old man who rushed to the Bagh, to search for his young nephew, said: "On reaching the garden, I found my nephew's body riddled with bullets. His skull was broken. There was one shot under his nose on the upper lips, two on the left side, one on the left neck, and three on the thigh, and some two or three on the head."

Within minutes Jallianwalla Bagh was drenched in blood. There were dead bodies on all sides. Soon darkness covered the city like a blanket. In the words of Rattan Devi, who became a widow that evening, the sight of the dead was hair-raising and harrowing. The brave woman took hours to identify her husband, and spent the night, all alone in a nearby jungle, where she had dragged the body away from the British eye.

For the people of Amritsar, this was the most terrible Baisakhi in their living memory. When the news of the massacre reached Calcutta, Subhas Chandra Bose (later to be known as 'Netaji') with a pistol in his hand, took an oath at a public meeting, to drive out the British from the Indian soil by force.

All accounts and contemporary documentary evidences are unanimous in their verdict that the Amritsar massacre was unparalleled in human history. While there was open rebellion in Punjab, the wave of anger spread throughout the country. Motilal Nehru asked the nation to respond to the call of the "Lacerated heart of the Punjab." Every Punjabi became a soldier, every house in the land became a fort. There was talk of independence everywhere.

The people's anguish was voiced by Rabindranath Tagore in his immortal letter to the Viceroy, renouncing his knighthood as a protest against the massacre of innocents at Jallianwalla Bagh. The Amritsar Congress Session in December that year was a historic session. It saw Gandhiji's emergence as the unquestioned leader of the nation.

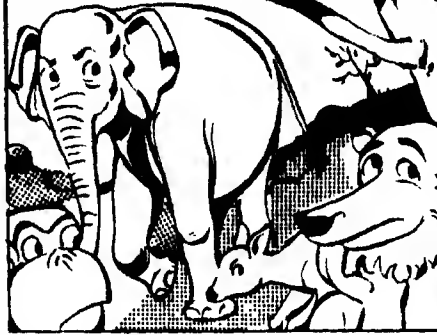
K.K. Khullar

KAPISH

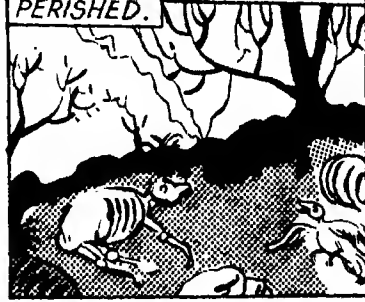


ANANT PAI
MOHANDAS

THE JUNGLE FOLK WERE
WORRIED.



A NUMBER OF FOREST
FIRES HAD OCCURRED IN
THE DAYS JUST PASSED,
AND MANY ANIMALS HAD
PERISHED.



THE DENIZENS OF THE JUNGLE THEREFORE
MET AND DISCUSSED
THE PHENOMENON.

COULD THE CALAMITY
BE DUE TO THE ANGER
OF THE EVIL SPIRITS
IN THE FORESTS ?



I DON'T
THINK
SO.

AS I WAS WALKING
DOWN YESTERDAY
IT SEEMED TO ME
THAT THE FIRE
STARTED FROM
A CAVE IN THE
HILL THERE.

YOU ARE NO
DOUBT, VERY
MIGHTY,
BUNDILA. BUT
EVERYONE
KNOWS, YOUR
EYESIGHT IS
NOT THAT
GREAT...



KAPISH SENT HIS TAIL HIGH UP IN THE
SKY. PANJA, THE EAGLE, SAW IT.



AH! KAPISH
WANTS
MY HELP.

SOON —

WHAT CAN I
DO FOR YOU ?

THERE HAVE
BEEN A NUMBER
OF FOREST FIRES
RECENTLY.
FIND OUT HOW
THEY WERE
CAUSED.



JUST THEN, THE GRASS HEAP, NEAR BY,
CATCHES FIRE.



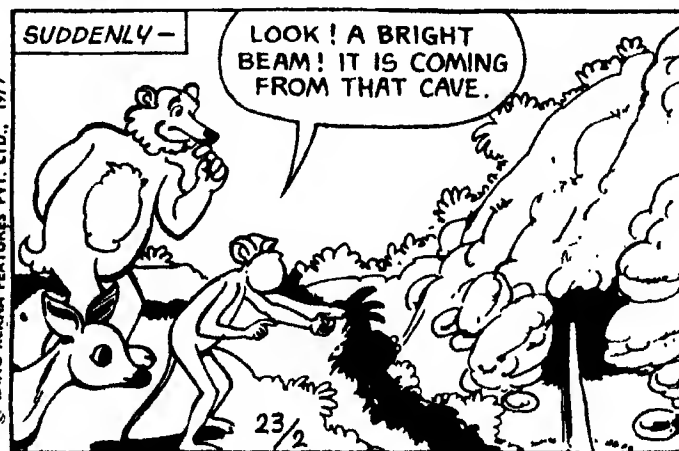
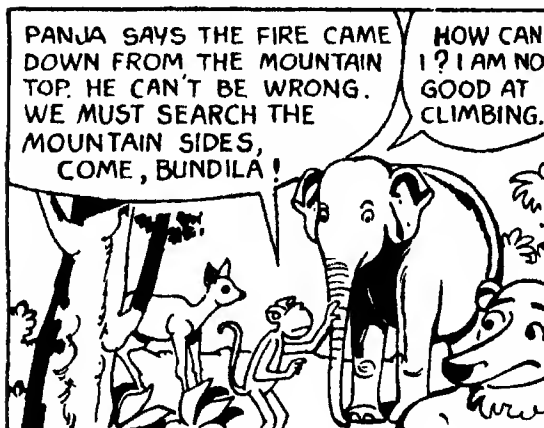
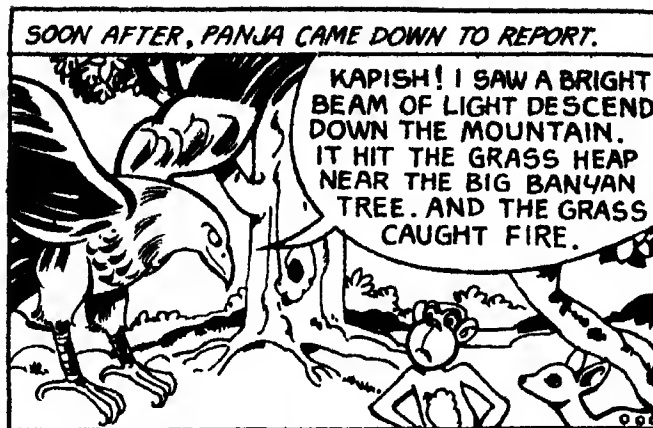
FIRE!
RUN!

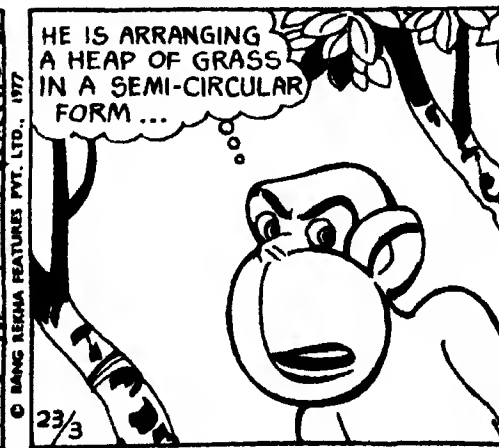
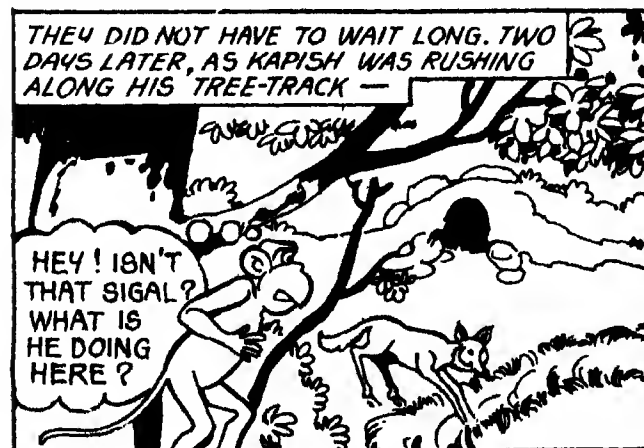
RUN!
RUN!

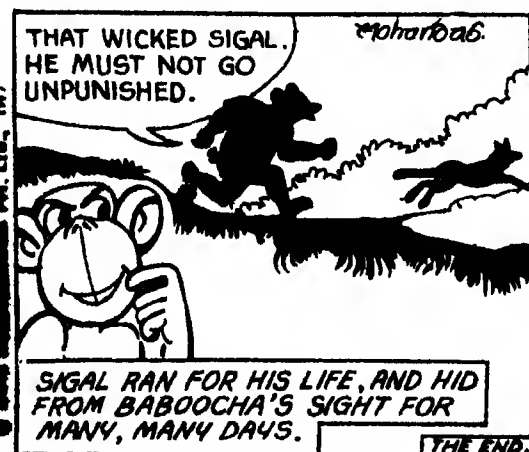
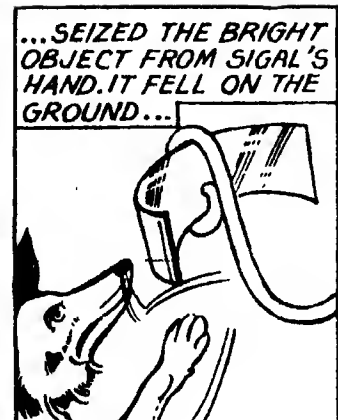
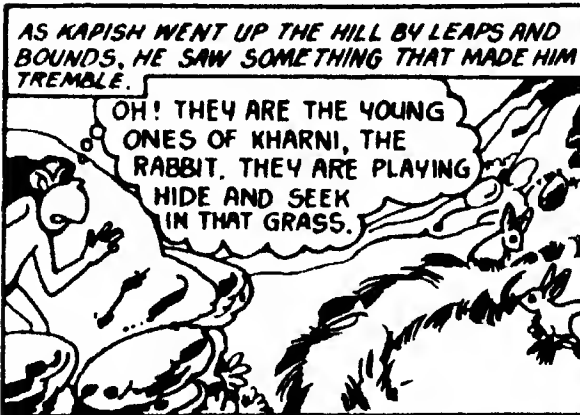
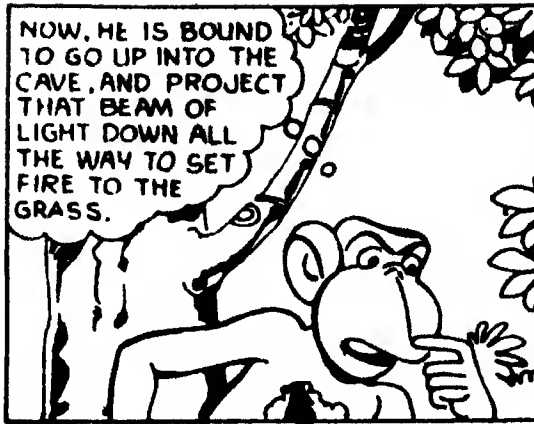
ALL THE ANIMALS RUN HELTER-SKELTER,
EXCEPT KAPISH —

THIS MUST BE
THE WORK OF DOPAYA.
HE MUST HAVE
FOUND A NEW WAY
OF HUNTING
ANIMALS.









UNCLE MOHAN IN ALEXANDRIA

“WELL,” said my Uncle Mohan after we had tasted the marmalade more than it was good for us, “let’s get the suitcase up.”

“The guest-room is next to the children’s room,” said my mother. “I hope they will not disturb you!” And she looked hard at us.

“No, we will not,” Ramu and I promised.

And Uncle Mohan said, “Neither will I.” Then he carried the suitcase up the staircase into the guest-room.

“Ah!” he said, after placing it on the stool and rubbing his hands. “That’s a lovely room! Now, kids, let’s open the suitcase, but where is my key?”

“In your pocket,” we suggested helpfully.

Uncle Mohan searched first his trouser-pocket, then his shirt-pocket and shook his head. “No, it is not here. I know, I kept it in a secret place. Where could that be?”

“Maybe inside your shoe heel!” said Ramu enthusiastically. He knew these things from the adventure stories he read.

Uncle Mohan and I looked down at his flat slippers and shook our heads together.

“Or inside the soapcake,” suggested Ramu a second time. But the soapcake was inside the soapbox inside Uncle Mohan’s suitcase.

Uncle Mohan looked at us with a mischievous smile in his eyes. “Ah,” he cried, “now I remember. Here it is,” and he took off his Mexican hat. Inside there was a small pocket with the key.

“Very clever,” said my brother in admiration. “I would never have thought of it.”

Neither would I.

“Now,” he said softly, “let me show you my treasures!” Slowly he opened the lid of the suitcase, and . . . there . . .

“Ohhh!” Ramu and I cried out disappointed. “These . . . but . . . where are the treasures?”

“Here,” answered Uncle Mohan and smiled. “You have only to look at them closely.”

So, we looked at the things inside the



suitcase very, very closely, but all we could see were an old 'Burkha', a funny paper umbrella, an oyster shell, a painted wooden box, and other things which did not look like treasures at all.

"But where is the gold?" asked Ramu.

"And the jewels and the pearls?" I cried.

"Treasures," said my uncle, "doesn't necessarily mean gold and jewels. At times, the gift of a simple thing, like this burkha for example, can mean more than money, or gold to you; sometimes it can save your life."

Ramu and I looked at him, a little ashamed, a bit puzzled, and feeling very, very uncomfortable.

"Sit down," said Uncle Mohan, "just let me tell you how it happened."

Ramu and I sat down next to him, and while Uncle Mohan spoke, I could see all the things he spoke of, everything that happened to him in Egypt on his way to Mombassa, where he was to get on a ship to India.

"There I was," said Uncle Mohan, "in Alexandria, with not much money in my pocket but a ticket from Mombassa to Bombay in my old yellow suitcase. There was nothing to worry about. Slowly, I strolled through the narrow crowded lanes of the harbour with its crowded, open shops, seamen from all parts of the world, the little half-naked children who giggled when I said 'hello' to them, and the silent figures of the women in burkha, who passed by me like a shadow. At a small sweet shop I stopped, stepped into it and asked the fat black-eyed Egyptian how I could reach the station. The Egyptian smiled and bowed, and smiled again and said something I could not understand. He reminded me of the actor, Omar Sharif.

"Thanks," I said, 'don't bother,' and waved good-bye. The fat black-eyed Egyptian waved back, not at me, but at some tall bearded men, who appeared suddenly from nowhere. There were three of them, and they looked at me, then at my old yellow suitcase, put their heads together and whispered.

"Bye, bye," I said, making it as casual

as I could and tried to step down to the pavement. But one of the tall bearded men stepped in my way and smiled, just twisting up the corner of his mouth; his eyes pierced at me as hard as before.

"Pardon me," I said, and stepped to the left, crashing into one of the others who bowed and said 'sorry', but did not mean it, nor did he move an inch.

"Hi, friends," I said, 'I have to go to the station, you know, railway station. I shall miss the train, so excuse me please.'

"I held the suitcase tight in my left hand and forced my way through.

"The three men encircled me and stood around me shoulder to shoulder, their bearded faces close to mine. They looked at me with their black burning eyes, smiling an unpleasant, a hard, yes, a dangerous smile.

"You," said the one who spoke a bit of English, 'you put down suitcase and put up hands.'

"The suitcase, yes, it was my good old yellow suitcase they were attracted by. My good old suitcase which was worth nothing, in which I carried nothing but... my ticket. Yes, my ticket to India was in it. If I were to lose that, well then I would be in trouble worse than now.

"I looked around, looked for help, but all eyes I met were hostile, unfriendly, indifferent.

"Police," I thought, the police would certainly help me. But would they understand? No, I had to get out of here as fast as possible.

"There!" I cried, and pointed towards the opposite building. 'Police! Policial Polisi!' I shouted at the top of my voice, in all the languages I knew. The men turned round and looked in the direction of my hand. At that moment, I pushed myself past the one on my left, jumped down to the pavement, and ran.

"The three men shouted, 'Stop! Hold him! Thief! Thief!' and followed me, shouting and waving their hand. I crashed into people, fell against a wall, stumbled over a dog who showed his teeth. Someone tried to hold me back by my sleeves, someone else grabbed my suitcase. I held tighter to

its handle, pushed him aside, tried to explain, but who would understand? No one!

"So all I could do was to run through the labyrinth of lanes and bylanes of Alexandria's suburb, trying to delude the three men who were after me and my good old yellow suitcase. I jumped over the open drainage, went through an open gate behind a bicycle shop, and stood lost in an open backyard with old tyres, drums, and metal scraps.

"Cornered! I was trapped, if they would find me here, I was lost. I had to get over the wall, which could lead me anywhere, even back into the arms of my pursuers. But I had to risk it. I jumped onto the drums, climbed up the wall, and looked into the courtyard of the neighbouring house. Two women in burkha sat near the door to a separate small room near the main building, cutting vegetables.

"'Excuse me, young ladies,' I cried, 'may I come down?' The two women shrieked, pulled down their veil, and ran into the main building, shouting, 'Mohamed, Mohamed!'

"Behind me, I heard the voice of people coming close, nearing the cycle shop already. I had to jump now, and so I did. I landed safely on the ground, next to my suitcase. I picked it up and looked around. Where could I hide now?

"'What do you want?' asked someone behind me. I turned round fearfully expecting to face another tall black-eyed man with a malicious smile, raising a knife at me.

"Instead, in front of me stood a young boy, dressed in a simple white kaftan. His eyes showed no fright, no anger, no hostility. 'Why have you come here?' he asked again, in slow, but perfect English.

"I bowed and said, 'Excuse this intrusion, but I need your help!' The boy looked at me and my suitcase, and back into my face. His eyes were very frank and very serious.

"'Come in,' he said, after a while, which seemed endless to me.

"I followed him into the main building, to a room with just a carpet in the middle and several low cushioned chairs without any backrest. It was cool and quiet there.



I knew I was safe. I sat down and wiped my face with my hand. It was trembling. 'Thank you,' I said, my voice strained a bit, still shaking.

"The boy smiled. 'Do not thank me,' he said, 'thank Allah, for it was he who sent you here. Do not worry, my friend, this house is yours, as much as it is mine!' And he bowed, with his arms crossed over his chest. 'Now tell me, what happened?'

"I told him my adventures, all that had happened to me during my short stay in Alexandria. His large, serious eyes looked sympathetic as he said, 'I am sorry. I deeply regret that this could happen in my country. Please forgive...'

"He stopped and listened. Voices were heard from outside. Someone knocked at the gate, demanding entrance. He looked at me. His eyes showed no sign of fright. 'Quick!' he whispered. 'Follow me into my sisters' room.'

"Gently he pushed me into the next room. 'Put on this burkha and sit down on your suitcase. Don't worry, just sit quiet. Everything will be all right.' He pulled

(Continued on page 48)

NOVELTY FOR INDIAN CHILDREN

Bachoo Paint Books

6 titles: Rupee One each

Learning is Fun

8 titles in Giftpack: Rs 10.50

Published by Thomson Press (India)

THE latest set in the **Bachoo Paint Books** series, meant for the entertainment and education of the tiny tots, is certainly something novel for children in India, especially those who have had no 'access' to similar publications from abroad. Apart from being refreshingly different from the ones already available in the market, they are also more sophisticated than those one can readily come across.

These books are intended to tell the little ones something about the subjects which they draw. The books on Trains, Flights, and Ships and Boats, for instance, tell about the development of these modes of transport, while the book on Insects and Under the Sea familiarise the children with insects and exotic sea animals. The illustrations are attractive and cannot fail to interest the child.

However, there are some avoidable slips and omissions. The page for Linked Balloons (**FLIGHT**) does not carry blanks for the word 'LINKED'. The child may fail to notice the distinction between **BALLOON** and **BALLOONS** appearing on successive pages. Since passenger planes alone have been depicted, one feels that the inclusion of a fighter plane and a trainer aircraft would have made the book more representative. In all the other books in the series, the individual items have been identified, but not so with the Butterflies. Haven't they any names?

The **Learning is Fun** Giftpack contains eight concept books for pre-school children. Illustrated in vivid colours to hold even small children's attention, each book explains a particular concept in a simple and imaginative way.

The **ABC Book** introduces the children to the alphabet; the **Book of Colours** ex-

plores the concept of colour through familiar objects; the **Book of Shapes** introduces the children to basic geometric shapes; **ME** helps the child to discover his own body; the **Book of Numbers** starts the children off on Numbers; **Bobo the Elephant** explains spatial concepts with a storyline; the **Book of Animals** introduces the child to the animal world; while the **Book of Opposites** explains words like 'empty' and 'full', 'thick' and 'thin,' with suitable illustrations.

As the set of books is meant for the very young, one cannot but be too careful about giving them the correct conception about things. Unfortunately, one notices certain slips and inaccuracies. The line 'Put them all together and its me' (**ME**), is grammatically incorrect due to the omission of the apostrophe. It should read either 'and it is me' or 'and it's me. The picture of the telephone (**SHAPES**) has only nine dialling grooves, instead of the ten actually found in real telephones. Also, the grooves should not occupy the entire circumference. A modern child is too sharp not to notice such inaccuracies.

The colour referred to as 'Blue' (**COLOURS**) is not blue at all, but looks purple (the same purple that appears a few pages later). Sweet potatoes are NOT orange, as mentioned. Though Bluebells are blue, it is not a flower which an Indian child is likely to come across in his own country. Could not a more familiar or common Indian flower have been mentioned, instead?

The word 'Post-Box' (**COLOURS**), is not to be hyphenated; they are two separate words, **POST BOX**. Watermelon is NOT one word; it should be hyphenated to read **WATER-MELON**. 'Lady fingers' is incorrect and should read 'Lady's finger' (two separate words). Besides, it is not to be used in the plural form. 'Starfish' is one word and should not be separated. The word Xmas (**ABC BOOK**) is never hyphenated to read X-mas.

BUBLEE

RAJA FINDS A HOME

KITTO and Bhaiya were most excited. They had their evening wash and got dressed without making any fuss. Any moment Mummy would come back from office with the surprise gift, which she had promised in the morning.

"What do you think it will be, Didi?" Bhaiya asked her.

"It could be a cooking set. Then we both can play house-house," Kitto decided.

"Oh, but we already have so many cookery toys. I hope she gets a gardening set this time. Then I can help 'mali' a bit," Bhaiya replied very seriously.

Kitto and Bhaiya got along very well. They seldom had any fights. And even if they did have a minor squabble, they made

up very fast. They also did very well at school.

The long summer holidays had just begun. Kitto and Bhaiya spent the days quite happily together. In the afternoons, they slept for sometime and in the evenings, by the time they got ready to go to the park, their Mummy would have come home. They had a brand new cycle which both could ride. They took turns and even allowed their newly-made friends in the park to take rides.

Today they still hadn't left for the park; their Mummy hadn't come back yet. "Didi, let us go," Bhaiya said. "We can see the gift when we come back." He was getting impatient.

"We will wait for some more time," his Didi said. "Maybe Mummy is still buying our surprise gift, and that is why she is late."

Bhaiya decided to take the bicycle and wait near the gate. Just then their Mummy came along down the road.

She was carrying a basket and had a wide grin on her face. 'Maybe it is something to eat,' Bhaiya thought. He shouted out to Kitto who came running out.

"Mummy, what is the surprise gift you have got for us?" Bhaiya asked.

"Let's go into the house first," Mummy said, smiling.

"No, Mummy, please!" said Bhaiya, still sitting on his cycle.

"Okay, here it is," Mummy said and uncovered the basket.

"Ooh!" Kitto said excitedly and tried to pick up the fluffy, wriggly, and most adorable puppy dog from the basket.

Bhaiya let go the cycle on the lawn and charged to grab it.

"Careful, Bhaiya," Mummy warned. "He is still a very small baby."

The cute brown ball of joy opened his eyes to confirm what she said. His bright eyes were a piercing black. He whimpered



as though asking to be picked up. Mummy lifted him out of the basket and they all went inside.

"Ooh, Mummy, thank you very much for such a lovely surprise gift," Kitto said.

Bhaiya, who didn't know how to make such speeches, went to his Mummy and gave her a big hug.

"Mummy, where shall we put him to sleep? He looks tired and sleepy," Kitto said, as though enacting the mother role whenever they played house-house.

"But how can he sleep without eating? What will he eat, Mummy?" Bhaiya asked.

"He will only have some milk. He is still a baby," Mummy said, and took out a pink plastic bowl from her bag. She had bought it specially for him.

The children followed her into the kitchen. "What shall we call him, Mummy?" Bhaiya asked.

"Let Daddy come home. We will then each choose a name and write it down on a piece of paper. Bhaiya can pick up a paper and the one on it will be his name!" Kitto explained in great detail.

Everyone agreed to that and decided to wait for Daddy. Mummy poured out some cold milk into the plastic bowl and the two children watched excitedly as the little puppy lapped it up greedily.

"Mummy, he doesn't know how to drink," Bhaiya said. "He is spilling most of it out."

"Don't worry. He will lick it all afterwards," Mummy replied. She soon got busy with her own work and left the children with the puppy. She was glad she had brought them the lovely pup.

"Mummy, where will he sleep?" Kitto asked, very concerned.

"Mummy, won't he feel lonely? Won't he ask for his mummy?" Bhaiya asked.

"One question at a time," Mummy said. "We'll put a gunny-bag in a cardboard box. He will sleep comfortably in that. And he won't feel lonely because the two of you will keep him company! His mummy is looking after his other brothers and sisters, and she gets very tired. That is why I brought him here, so that you two can look after him."

Kitto and Bhaiya felt very proud of their

new responsibility. They resolved to see to it that he was happy with them. When Mummy had made his bed in the cardboard box, they gently put him to sleep. He seemed to like his bed, for he settled down snugly and was soon fast asleep.

"Didi, shall we keep his box in our room? We can then look after him all the time, isn't it?" Bhaiya asked.

"Yes, we will keep him next to our cupboard," Kitto replied, and they lifted the box and took it in.

Mummy was in the kitchen when Daddy came home from work. The children dashed up him and together told him about their surprise gift, and how they had planned to name the puppy. They asked him to think of a name rightaway.

"Let Daddy have a cup of tea first," Mummy said from behind.

And so, they all sat down at the dining table and over tea and biscuits, the great problem of naming the pup was solved. Kitto brought out four pieces of paper and a pen, and they all wrote the name that came to their mind. Finally, Mummy picked up a paper and read out the name written on it. "Raja!"

"That is my name," Bhaiya shouted.

"The name you thought for the puppy," Kitto corrected him.

"Yes, it is all the same," Bhaiya argued. Kitto decided to remain quiet.

And from that day onwards, their life revolved round Raja. He had also become their tail! Wherever Kitto and Bhaiya went, Raja was right behind them. They had to watch out when they walked, because Raja had a knack of coming in their way and giving a little help if they stepped on him. They gave him his meal regularly—pieces of bread soaked in milk. If they were a little late, he would look up from his little height and barked as if to remind them.

Kitto and Bhaiya took turns in carrying him when they took him out in the mornings and evenings. Raja often struggled to get off and walk by himself, but he had no road sense as yet and Mummy had said he was still quite small. They even took him to the park, and little Raja was soon becoming a favourite of their friends as well.

Raja loved running about and he chased the children all over the green lawn. He had also become a little plump and looked a sight as he trundled along after them. Often he would tilt over and fall on one side. And the passers-by would smile, because he looked so cute that way.

Raja was becoming so fond of Kitto and Bhaiya that, at night, he had learnt to sneak out of his box and sleep near their feet, on their bed! They didn't even mind him snuggling up to them, but Mummy was strict. "You are not going to spoil him. People will praise you if you train him to learn some manners," she told them.

So Kitto and Bhaiya started teaching him manners and some small tricks. Raja had also learnt to run out of the gate if it was left open, and then he was at the mercy of the big dogs on the road. Suddenly, Kitto or Bhaiya would hear him bark loudly out on the road and rush out to bring him back. He would then be locked up in their room—as punishment!

The holidays were nearly coming to an end. Kitto and Bhaiya had done their homework, so they didn't have to worry. They decided to rearrange their cupboard

lest Mummy shouted at them. Raja was, of course, right in the midst of it all. And Bhaiya also was not much of a help because he didn't know how to fold his clothes properly. Anyway, he picked up his own clothes and rearranged his toys shelf. Raja jumped all over the clothes and tugged at a skirt of Kitto's. She gave him one rap, but that only made him leave it and pick up another frock!

"Mummy, we can't do any work here," Kitto yelled and went to the kitchen. "Raja is spoiling it all."

Bhaiya who was waiting for an excuse to stop work, quietly closed the cupboard and followed his Didi out.

"Don't worry," Mummy said, "we will do it after lunch. But where is Raja?" she asked the two angry children.



"He must be feeling guilty and hiding in a corner," Kitto said. She picked up a book to read, and Bhaiya took his cycle to the lawn.

"Children, lunch is ready!" Mummy called out and since they always felt hungry during the holidays, they were at the dining table like a shot!

While they ate, Bhaiya asked, "Mummy, is Raja still hiding?"

"I have not seen him," Mummy said.

"He won't sit quiet for such a long time," Kitto said and got up.

"Finish your lunch and then look for him," Mummy told her. "He must be around somewhere."

Kitto and Bhaiya ate their food fast. Suddenly, they were worried. The house was too quiet for words. And it was very unusual. As soon as they had washed their hands, they started calling out for Raja. But, strangely, they heard no bark in response. Kitto panicked, and at once charged out of the house to look for him. Bhaiya looked under the beds and cupboards and in the bathroom. He searched every corner of the

house. By then Mummy, too, had joined the search party.

"Where could he go?" Bhaiya pondered. Kitto soon came back to the house without any luck. She went to her room again to look for him, because that was where she had seen him last. The room looked quite a mess, what with all the clothes out on the bed and all over the floor.

"Raja, Raja!" Kitto called out and moved the clothes aside, hoping that she would find him there. Suddenly, she heard something that sounded like a whimper. But she couldn't spot the direction from where the sound had come. Again she called his name and this time the whimper was louder and she even heard some scratching on the wood. He was definitely somewhere near.

Bhaiya also came into the room and started calling him. When he heard the muffled bark, he went straight to the cupboard and opened it. And there bundled out poor Raja, free at last and quite ruffled. He jumped on all of them and kept licking them as though to say, 'Sorry, I won't trouble you again!'

Alaka Shankar

ARRIVAL OF DAWN

The pale-gold moon is fading away
into the fiery red sky.

The sea a deep blue, through
which the sun is rising high.

The glassy dew a carpet, on the
green velvety grass.

The rays of the sun radiant
against the green hills, washed
clean by rain.

The sweet chirping of the birds,
trying to collect grain.

The cool breeze, piercing
through the trees, which gently sway.

The serene picture of beauty, so
perfect and gay.

The light has crept in, has
come the blissful dawn.

The shadows far away, the night
having gone.

*R. Shanti (15)
India*

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING GIRL



THE STORY SO FAR

Prakash Tandon, his younger sister Vinita, and their friend Avi go to Mr. Mullick's shop to buy a present for Avi's younger sister, Tinu. It is her sixth birthday.

A big built man is seen talking to Mr. Mullick. He keeps quiet as soon as the children enter. They ask for a Hulla-Hoop Girl and Mr. Mullick gets one from the back-store all neatly wrapped.

When Tinu opens her gifts, she finds a Hulla-Hoop Girl from the Shuklas. Her cousin, Seema, cries for it and Avi gives her the same gift from Prakash and Vini. Seema takes the unopened box and runs to her room. Tinu plays with her toy, till it breaks.

The next morning, it is in the papers that the police had searched Mr. Mullick's shop for diamonds, but that nothing had been found. Prakash and Vini run to Avi with the news.

Avi, too, has news. Overnight, Tinu's broken Hulla-Hoop Girl has been replaced with a new one. It must be Seema's mother, Aunt Nandini, who has replaced it, they presume.

Then, Inspector Bhalla telephones to enquire about the toy they had bought at Mullick's. Avi tells him all about it and that it is with them still. The Inspector calls him 'silly' and disconnects the phone!

A phone call to Aunt Nandini reveals that she hadn't replaced the toy, and that Seema's box actually contained a Rock-n-Roll Boy! Is this why the Inspector had called Avi silly? Avi telephones him to tell him the latest news, and finds that it isn't the Inspector who had rung up.

The children are thoroughly baffled and decide to go outside to figure things out. Then, suddenly, they stop. They see Prakash standing as though transfixed, staring straight ahead! One of the glasspanes in the window is broken!

The broken glass, some tapes, and the trail of blood-spots leading to the dining table, all point out that someone had broken in.

Avi's mother, Mrs. Tayal, telephones Inspector Bhalla. The police arrive. They inspect the place, take fingerprints, and come to the same conclusions as the children. What was on the dining table? After the police leave, the phone rings. It is Mr. Tandon. He informs Prakash that he is going to Meerut.

Almost immediately the phone rings again. Prakash answers it. Inspector Bhalla's impersonator asks for Aunt Nandini's address in Meerut. He gives him Uncle Mathur's address, instead. Right after that he telephones his father and asks if Avi, Vini, and he can go with him to Meerut. Mr. Tandon agrees. The children take Tinu's Hulla-Hoop Girl along.

As their car picks up speed, the wrapper on the Girl falls apart and the children notice some brown spots on the toy. At Meerut, they tell the Mathur children, Tara and Bobby, all about the mystery of the toys. It is evident that Prakash ('Kashlock Holmes' to Vini) is expecting a caller, though the others wonder why he has given him apparently a wrong address. Prakash suddenly remembers the spots and scrapes them off to collect the brown particles in a piece of paper.

Just as expected, a stranger makes his appearance and offers to replace the broken toy with a brand new Girl, "as instructed by Mr. Mullick". Tara engages the caller, who introduces himself as Yusuf Khan, on the veranadah, takes advice from Prakash and hands over the Girl. Yusuf obliges her by demonstrating the new toy himself and also parts with its carton, before he hurries away. Prakash has by now taken a good look at the man's face, his missing arm, and his shoes. He compliments Tara for securing the man's fingerprints on the toy. A visit to Aunt Nandini does not reveal anything peculiar about the Rock-n-Roll Boy there. Later, Tara and Bobby go with their friends to Delhi.

Now read on...

8. A NEW CLUE

NEXT MORNING, the first thing Prakash did was to take the new Hulla-Hoop Girl to Inspector Bhalla. Avi went with him, while Vinita stayed back with Tara and Bobby.

Luckily, the Inspector was alone in his office. He welcomed the two boys and offered them seats.

"The mystery of the toys, isn't it?" he said, smiling.

"Yes, Uncle," said Prakash. "Yesterday, we saw the man who was posing as you on the phone!"

"You did?" said Inspector Bhalla with some surprise. "That's interesting. How? Who's he?"

Prakash then briefly told him about their visit to Meerut. Avi filled in details every now and then.

"Here are his fingerprints," said Prakash, pushing the box towards the Inspector. "Perhaps you can identify the man by his fingerprints?"

Mr. Bhalla laughed. "You're right, but only if he has some past criminal record. You know we don't keep the fingerprints of good fellows, like you!"

Prakash, too, laughed. "That's a chance. I don't know if the man has committed any crimes in the past. But, as we've worked it out, we feel he's the same man who broke into Avi's house. Oh, I forgot to tell you. I've secured a specimen of what seems to me dried blood," Prakash said and took out from his pocket the folded paper contain-

ing the scrapings from the Hulla-Hoop Girl that was returned to Mr. Yusuf at Meerut. He handed it over to the Inspector.

"I think you boys have done excellent work," said Inspector Bhalla. "It may sound strange, but sometimes criminals are careless with children! Boys like you may prove to be a hazard to them! Anyway, do be careful, and don't meddle too much with things, for you may land up in trouble," he cautioned them as they stood up to go.

When Prakash and Avi got back home, Vini and Tara had news for them. "You know something?" said Vinita, "Mr. Mullick hasn't opened his shop since that day."

"Why?" asked Avi.

"There's word going round that he feels too ashamed to come out, after that police raid. It appears he stays locked up in his house, and is not meeting anyone," said Vinita.

Prakash thought over this piece of news. He felt that it was significant and tried to fit it in somewhere. Where? How?

Prakash continued to unravel the mixed-up clues.

The next afternoon he rang up Inspector Bhalla.

"You were right, Prakash," the Inspector told him, "they are the same fingerprints of the man who broke into Avi's house. And the dried blood specimen matches, too. Unfortunately, we don't seem to find any past record of this man. We've sent copies of the fingerprints to other places to check up if we can find some information some-



where. But, Prakash," the Inspector said after a brief pause, "I'm beginning to believe there's something more in this than just the toys. I am on it myself, and I wouldn't interfere with the good work you're doing. Carry on, but only from a distance. Don't lean out too far, it may be dangerous. And if you need help, you just let me know."

The Inspector hung up. Prakash was very happy. His conclusions had been correct and the Inspector had appreciated his work. He told the others about his conversation with the Inspector.

"What do we do next?" asked Vinita.

"I think we should try and sort out things. There are a lot of loose ends," said Tara.

"Yes," agreed Prakash. "First of all, the breaking of the window. It is no longer a mystery. The purpose was to exchange the toys."

Everyone agreed. "Now, let's take up these Hulla-Hoop Girls," said Tara. "There are too many of them! Exactly how many are there?"

"There is the one we purchased from Mullick's," said Vinita. "God knows where it has disappeared!"

"Suppose Uncle Mullick had made a mistake," said Avi, giving a new twist to the mystery. "We know how nervous he was that day, with the policeman in his shop. He even forgot to place the gift card. Normally, he's very careful about such things."

"That gives me an idea," said Vinita. "Perhaps, by mistake, Uncle had given us the wrong toy. In fact, we only saw the box all wrapped up, we never opened it!"

"So, the first Girl is the one you bought at Mullick's," said Tara. "Assuming it was really there in the packet you got, it seems this man Yusuf, is frantically after this Girl. But as this Girl has already disappeared without our knowledge, or this man's knowledge, it looks as though someone else was also interested in the same Girl, and has managed to get hold of it — we don't know from where. Maybe he got an opportunity at Aunt Nandini's place to change it."

"That's about the first Girl," said Vinita. "The second is the one presented by the Shuklas. It was given to Tinu who later damaged it. And the same night, it was taken away by Yusuf."

"That's right," said Tara, "and the third is the one he had placed on the dining table in exchange. It is once again with him!"

"And the fourth is what Yusuf gave Tara at Meerut, again in exchange," said Avi.

"Thus there are four Hulla-Hoop Girls involved," said Vinita. "And all we've got is one! The first

one — let's call it the Chief Girl — is nowhere to be seen."

"But why should anybody be interested in that particular Girl, the Chief Girl, I mean," said Tara.

Everyone looked at Prakash expectantly, because they thought he might have an answer. But he only shrugged his shoulders and said, "That's the worst part. I can't think of any reason. However, let's see. How did it come to be known that we had purchased a Hulla-Hoop Girl from Mullick's?"

"That's a fine approach," remarked Tara. "Now, who knew about this purchase? Of course, you three and your mothers and fathers, perhaps."

"Why? I had also told my friends," said Vinita. "A few days ago, we were talking about Tinu's birthday party."

"Now, wait a minute," said Prakash. "I didn't mean, who knew that we had presented a Hulla-Hoop Girl to Tinu. I meant, who knew that we had purchased it from Mullick's? We three, Mummy, Mr. Mullick, and that fat Police officer talking to Mr. Mullick in the shop that day."

"Oh, you're on to something now," said Avi. "Go on."

"Well," Prakash resumed his arguments, "we didn't go chasing after the Chief Girl. Nor did Mummy. So that leaves Mr. Mullick, and the Police officer."

"Poor Uncle Mullick, he must be hiding in shame," said Vinita, feeling sorry for him. "Moreover, I can't see any reason why he should go about chasing after a toy he himself had sold us. He could have easily given us some other toy, if he wanted the Chief Girl so badly."

"And that leaves only the Police officer," said Avi. "Does it mean that the man who's making all this fuss is a policeman? My god, is that possible?"

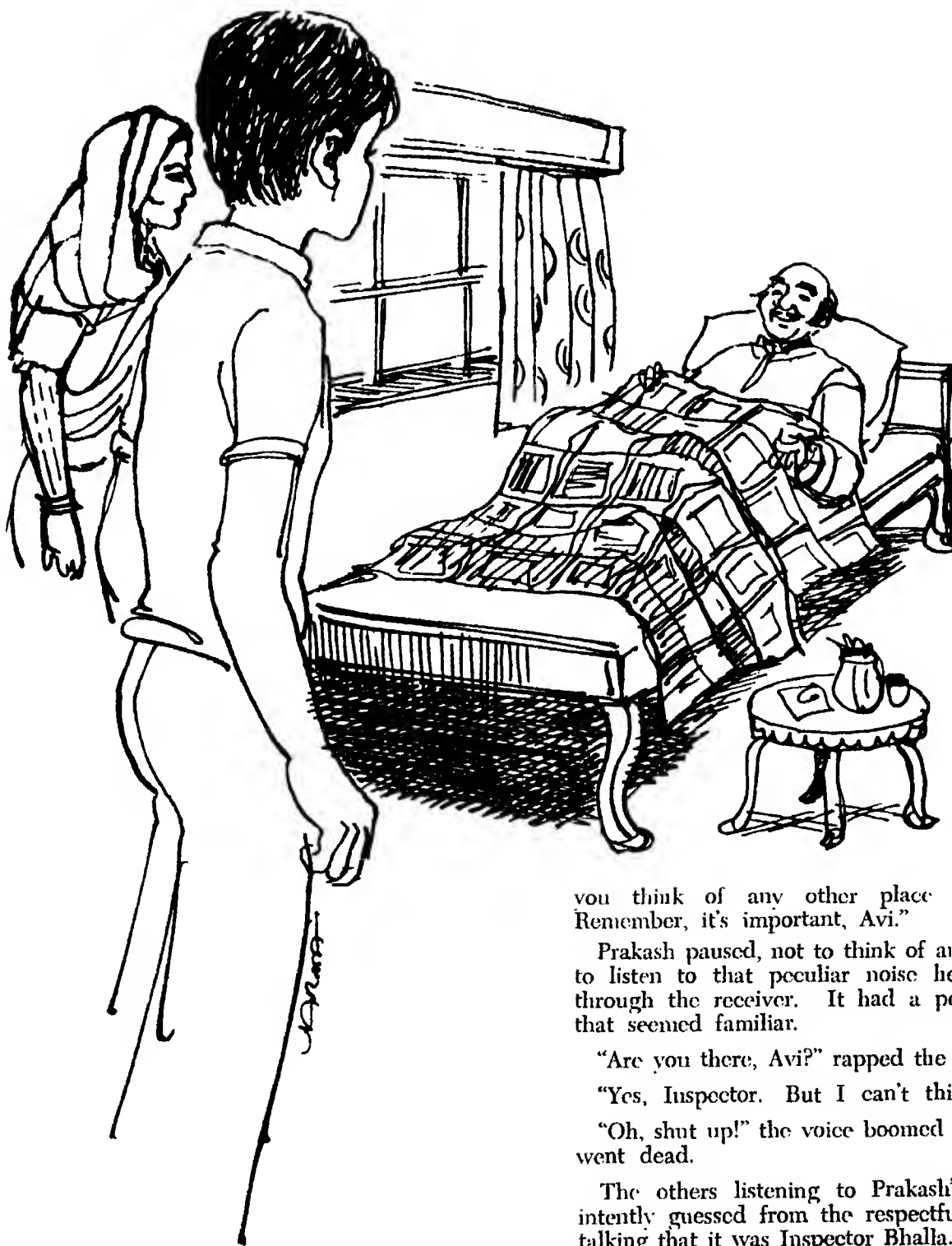
Just then the phone started ringing, and Prakash went to take the call.

"Is it Avi?" said the voice. Prakash at once recognized it as that of the person posing as Inspector Bhalla. "He must have tried Avi's place and learnt that Avi is here," Prakash thought. "H-m-m-m," he hummed, without making himself clear.

"You stupid fool!" the voice sounded irritated and impatient. "You said that the Hulla-Hoop Girl you bought at Mullick's was given to Mrs. Nandini. It's not the same one, but another Girl."

"But, Inspector," said Prakash feigning ignorance, "that's what we did. We gave the whole packet to her unopened."

There was a short pause. A peculiar sound



could be heard in the background. Not a human sound, but something mechanical. "What could it be?" Prakash thought.

The voice came on again. "I can't understand what's happening. The Girl at your aunt's place wasn't the one you purchased. It was the one I placed...." The voice broke off suddenly.

"Oh, damn it," the man said irritably. "Can

you think of any other place it might be? Remember, it's important, Avi."

Prakash paused, not to think of any answer, but to listen to that peculiar noise he was hearing through the receiver. It had a peculiar rhythm that seemed familiar.

"Are you there, Avi?" rapped the voice.

"Yes, Inspector. But I can't think of any..."

"Oh, shut up!" the voice boomed and the phone went dead.

The others listening to Prakash's conversation intently guessed from the respectful way he was talking that it was Inspector Bhalla. But when he burst out laughing as soon as he had placed the receiver back, they knew they had been wrong.

"He's fuming with anger," he said, "that Mr. Yusuf! He thought I was you, Avi. He has discovered that the Girl he got at Meerut is the same one that he had placed in your house. He almost said it!"

Prakash laughed again, but he soon came up with a suggestion. "Let's go to Mr. Mullick's house

and find out if he could have made any mistake while giving us the toy."

"But he's not seeing anybody," said Vinita.

"We'll try our luck. Does anyone know where he lives?" asked Tara.

"Yes, South Extension," said Avi. "I went there last year with Daddy for his daughter's wedding."

"Oh, that's fine," said Prakash happily. "Only everybody has to contribute from their pocket-money for the bus fare!"

The road in front of Mr. Mullick's house was being repaired. Coal-tar had been laid over a long patch and workers wearing gum-boots were spreading stone chips over it. The children stopped to watch the labourers.

A road-roller clanked loudly as it ran over the stone chips. Prakash looked at the fly-wheel which went 'Clank, clank, clank, clank'. Suddenly, his eyes brightened up in recognition. And he smiled to himself.

"How do we approach him, I mean Mr. Mullick?" asked Tara. "It's going to be difficult, because he isn't seeing anybody."

Prakash smiled. "I think if Avi goes, he'll talk to him with all interest."

"How?" asked Avi.

"Go and try. I can't be wrong," said Prakash confidently. "But speak less and listen more. Don't let out anything we know."

"He has something under his hat!" said Vinita. "I can tell from his face."

Prakash smiled again, as though in agreement.

Avi crossed over to Mr. Mullick's door while the others waited at a distance.

A maid came out to answer the bell.

"My name is Avi," Avi told her. "I want to talk to Mr. Mullick."

"He isn't seeing anyone," replied the maid.

A voice could be heard from inside the house. "Let that boy in, Barki." It was Mr. Mullick's voice. Avi suddenly remembered what Prakash had said. Mr. Mullick seemed to be really interested in him!

Barki led Avi to a room where Mr. Mullick lay on a bed covering himself with a blanket.

"Come in, son. Come in," said Mr. Mullick, welcoming Avi. "What's it that you want?"

"Uncle, Prakash, Vini and I were very sad to know about you. And I am sorry to bother you. Someone is pestering me on the phone every day." Avi was really bitter about it.

Mr. Mullick's face turned white. He seemed quite agitated and sat up in his bed. The blanket slipped down his shoulders. "But, but," he said nervously, "wasn't it Inspector Bhalla who has been phoning you?"

Avi wondered how Mr. Mullick came to know about the phone calls. He was about to say 'no' when, suddenly, Prakash came in. "Good afternoon, Uncle," he said aloud, interrupting Avi.

After Avi had gone inside the house, Prakash had started worrying about him. Somehow he was afraid that Avi might give out too much. It could cause trouble, he felt. Hadn't Inspector Bhalla advised him 'not to lean out too far'? He then made up his mind and rushed to Mr. Mullick's door which he saw was still open.

When he entered Mr. Mullick's room he overheard Avi telling him about the phone calls. Some damage had already been done, Prakash feared. Perhaps it could be set right. That's when he butted in and greeted him.

"Oh!" Mr. Mullick was startled for a moment. "So, you too are there! Great friends both of you, eh? Always together!"

"Yes, Uncle," said Prakash.

"Come in and sit down," said Mr. Mullick. "Avi was just telling me that someone has been pestering him on the phone. I thought it was Inspector Bhalla."

Avi again opened his mouth to say 'no'. But Prakash quickly said, "So, you already know about it, Uncle?", thus evading the issue.

Mr. Mullick just smiled and lay down again in his bed.

Avi now realised that, for some reason, Prakash was trying to hide facts from Mr. Mullick. He, too, became careful.

"So what brought you here?" Mr. Mullick asked.

"Uncle," said Prakash, "do you have any idea, what's so important about that Hulla-Hoop Girl we bought from you? I suppose you know that someone broke into Avi's house to steal it. But that particular toy wasn't there."

"Yes," said Mr. Mullick. "I heard about it. But I've no idea why anyone should be interested in a mere toy."

They were silent for a while. "But where's that Girl anyway?" he then asked and added hurriedly, "If we see it, we can find out what's so important about it."

Avi spoke carefully now. "We gave the packet to Aunt Nandini, so it should be with her."

"Uncle," said Prakash, "do you think there could have been a mistake when you packed the toy?"

"Mistake? What sort of a mistake do you mean?" he asked Prakash, looking at him with surprise.

"I mean," explained Prakash, "you might have packed the wrong toy. Not the one this man is after."

"Oh, no. No question of that," said Mr. Mullick firmly, and hastened to explain, "I mean I had packed a Hulla-Hoop Girl as you asked for. And I think this man is after the same Girl."

Mr. Mullick became so excited that he started rubbing his chin. Prakash noticed a strip of adhesive plaster on his wrist.

Prakash was silent for a while. Then he asked, "How about a Rock-n-Roll Boy?"

"What about it?" said Mr. Mullick. "I didn't have any with me, even if you had asked for it. I had sold the last piece that very morning. But, what about it?"

"Nothing particular," said Prakash rising. "There was some talk about it."

The boys then took leave of Mr. Mullick and went out to join Vinita and Tara and Bobby. Inspector Bhalla was right, thought Prakash. People are careless before children! They make slips, assuming they wouldn't be noticed.

"Did you learn anything new?" asked Tara.

Avi replied, "Mr. Mullick didn't make a mistake. He had no Rock-n-Roll Boy in his shop at that time."

"That's a lazy old thing," said Bobby looking desperately at the huge road roller. "I asked the driver to race it on the road. He pressed the lever full. But all it did was to make a lot of noise 'clank, clank, clank clank'. It can't even run as fast as I can."

"But it's a very useful machine," said Prakash cryptically.

"It makes our roads," said Vinita.

"And it gives clues!" said Prakash.

Everyone looked up at him in surprise. "Clues!" they exclaimed.

Sudha Goel

(To be continued)

THE MISSING KEYS

IT WAS a warm Sunday afternoon in May with the mercury almost trying to jump out of the glass tube. All the same, we had succeeded in blocking off the outside heat and were relaxing over a game of 'spello-done'. Papa, too, had joined in, in one of his rare bits of spare time. Mummy, suddenly, burst into the room and announced that her silver keyring and keys were missing. The heat this generated was warmer than any furnace or steam engine.

The whole family joined in the search for the missing keys. "They'll soon be found," Papa said, trying to display a sense of poise and making light of the whole event. Mama's reaction to this made it amply clear that she did not think it to be any trifling affair.

The search soon became intense. Our driver and cook, too, joined in. For the next 30 minutes or so, every part of the house was searched.

"You had locked the box last. You should be knowing," Mummy suddenly stormed at me.

"I did lock the box, but I gave back the keys to you," I informed her.

On with the search operations again. It was becoming like an Enid Blyton, rather like a Perry Mason mystery. The cupboards were opened up. The drawers were ransacked. The book shelves turned upside down.

We were all getting rather desperate. My parents had to go for a party in the evening, and Mummy wanted her jewellery box out.

My younger sister had been more sensible. She had gone off for a shower bath. "Have the keys been found?" she enquired, emerging cool and clean from the bathroom.

"Of course, not," I said rather cattily. After dressing up, she went to her socks' drawer. And behold! The bunch of keys lay easily perched on top of the socks dump. "Hurrah!" she shouted. "I've found the keys!" She might as well have been shouting "Eureka" like a mini-Archimedes!

The search was over, but now the enquiry started. How did the keys reach the socks cupboard? Who put them there and why? "The keys can't walk," Mummy declared in her incontrovertible logic. "And no ghost could have visited either," she continued. She was, of course, right—or was she? We had found the missing keys, but we now needed a Perry Mason to resolve the mystery of their hiding place.

"Let's celebrate," said Papa, trying to recreate the Sunday spirit. I could only curse the invention of keys and swear that I'd never lock anything of mine when I grow up.

*Namit Anand (12)
India*

SCIENCE FICTION

RAMU IN



1. SIGNALS AT OOTACAMUND

IT WAS the summer of 2077. Nestling among the lush green Nilgiri mountains, Ootacamund in Tamilnadu was overflowing with holiday-makers from different parts of the world. Secluded from the busy streets was a radio-telescope, which had become famous for discovering new worlds, millions of light years away, by recording the radio 'noise' from them. A serene atmosphere prevailed, ideal for intellectual pursuits. There were, indeed, several foreign students who had gone there for research. The radio waves from the outer space had been a constant source of wonder about the nature of the distant parts of the Universe.

Suddenly, the sylvan meadows echoed an alarm. No, there was no fire or burglary. It was one of those warnings that were let off automatically whenever the computers found something unusual. The control room then put out a "Bleep! Bleep!" signal. Scientists within a radius of a hundred kilometres, including those enjoying the scenes of wild life in the nearby sanctuary, heard the signal on their pocket radios. Soon, the control room was humming with people.

The signals were unique. Nothing like them had been heard or recorded before.

Several scientists jumped in joy. Something unique in the history of radio astronomy was round the corner, they said. Indeed, several features of the radio universe had been first discovered by the Ootacamund instrument. The jubilation lasted till the first print-out from the computer was in their hands. Then the elation gave way to worry, doubt and anxiety. Even the senior scientists were puzzled.

The reason was obvious: the signals were quite different this time. They were not from natural objects, which they had been tracking. The signals varied in intensity, as if they were beamed from a fast approaching asteroid or a spaceship. Also, they were never repetitive.

The engineer in charge was soon on the master phone. He got in touch with his co-workers in similar stations in India and abroad. He was surprised to find that from everywhere he received more or less the same type of questions. The radio noise was nothing but throwing a challenge to the whole world. No one could decipher it, but everyone knew that something significant and strange was going to happen. A check with the world's leading computers confirmed their view. Computer complexes at Canary Island, Kourou, Canberra, Madrid, Vladivostok, Porz Wahn (West Germany)

and Torun (Poland) re-affirmed that the signals were not due to any satellite launched by man.

Meanwhile, astronomers at the giant optical telescope at Kavalur, near Jalarpet in Tamilnadu, reported the presence of a strange sphere fast orbiting Mars. The telescope there had never gone wrong. Indeed, it was the first to report strange flashes of light on Jupiter, which for some time dwarfed the red eyes of the giant planet. These lights provoked decades of controversy, but the finding was never questioned.

Two days later, the sphere was not in Martian orbit, and the signals at Ootacamund only increased in intensity. The computers in the Andaman Islands and the radar at Sriharikota space centre, near Madras, were soon pressed into service. Aiding the search for the invisible source of radio noise was the satellite, Vikram, named after India's space pioneer. It kept an eternal vigil on strange happenings like nuclear explosions as far as Jupiter.

In cooperation with similar watch-dog

satellites, Vikram could roughly indicate the direction of the noise. Soon, predictions began on the likely trajectory of the mysterious object. It was not a comet, as there was no tail of hydrogen glistening in the sun. It was not an asteroid, as computer studies had not predicted one at that time. In any case, no asteroid made such alternating radio noise.

Four days went by. Four days of suspense. Calculations filled the blackboards. Theories were hotly debated, but nothing strange was visible in the sky. On the fifth day, Kavalur reported sighting of a star during daytime! People recalled the Crab Nebula, a glowing ocean of gas which was visible in 1054 A.D. during daytime. A new 'star' had arrived.

However, advanced optical instruments revealed that it was not a star at all. It looked like a huge spaceship, with giant radio beacons protruding in all directions. It resembled a giant star-fish.

Mohan Sundara Rajan

(To be continued)

HOW and WHY

Ravinder Singh Bawa (14), New Delhi asks: Does a snake hear?

No. A snake cannot hear sounds in the same way as you and I hear them. In fact, the absence of any external ear opening is one of the chief characteristics of the family of snakes. The middle ear and the ear drum are also absent. The bones of the former (which are used for carrying sounds to the inner ear from the outer ear) are attached to the inner jawbones in the snake. The inner ear is mainly used as in humans for maintaining balance.

The possible reason for these external ear structures becoming obsolete could be its tendency to burrow in earth, where airborne sounds have no place. But a snake does detect sounds, like a footfall, etc., which spell danger for it. This detection is done

by its skull bones, which pick up vibrations from the ground. This way, the snake becomes aware of enemy or prey. At this stage, you might like to recall that many a snake came out of their holes a few days before the big earthquake hit China. This phenomenon led them to predict the quake and evacuate the city.

This, incidentally, makes us wonder what snake-charmers and cobra dancers are about. The extended hood of the cobra is a natural attitude of defence. It follows every movement of the charmer in this position. Swaying to and fro, it alters its position in aiming to strike its aggressor. The music from the reed appeals only to our imagination! It means nothing at all to the snake, who is deaf to sounds of this kind.

Meera Ramakrishnan

PUZZLES

TEST YOUR IQ

1. What is the Latin name for Switzerland?
2. What is a 'sauna'?
3. Which disease is spread by the tse-tse fly?
4. What is a catch-pole?
5. What is the capital of Lilliput in 'Gulliver's Travels'?
6. Who was Romeo's first love?
7. What important discovery was made by Roentgen?
8. What is a shogun?
9. Which football team is called the toffee-men?

Samir Sachdeva (14)

INSTRUMENT QUIZ

What are the following instruments used for?

1. Hygrometer, 2. Seismograph, 3. Ammeter, 4. Electroscope, 5. Rheostat, 6. Galvanometer, 7. Rain Gauge, 8. Barometer.

Harshita Venkateswaran (13)

CITIES, NATIONS

I Name these 'cities'....

1. This city gives a shock, 2. This city is fast, 3. This city is wise, 4. This city is truthful, 5. This city is eloquent.

II And these 'nations':

1. This nation adds together, 2. This nation is a test, 3. This nation has power of thinking, 4. This nation murders a person.

M.V.G. Padmavathi

PICK THE RIGHT ONE

1. Which is the smallest bird in the world: a) sparrow, b) crow, c) humming bird.
2. Which city is called the 'City of Skyscrapers': a) Paris, b) Washington, c) New York.
3. Which country is called the 'Land of the Rising Sun': a) Japan, b) India, c) China.
4. For what was Hans Christian Andersen famous: a) as an explorer, b) as a soldier, c) as a writer of stories for children.

5. Who invented the telephone: a) Graham Bell, b) Henry Ford, c) Alexander Fleming.

Shobha Iyer (11)

RIDDLES

1. It belongs to you, yet your friends, without buying, borrowing, or stealing it, use it much more than you do! What is it?
2. What table has no legs?
3. Where are you sure to go when you are 19 years old?
4. What is the question which never has "yes" as its answer?
5. Why can't it rain for two days continually?
6. What is full of holes and yet holds water?
7. What is it that dogs have and nothing else has?

Narendra Kumar Kalra (15)

1. Your name, 2. Time-table, 3. Into your 20th year, 4. "Are you a fool?" 5. Because there is always a night in between two days, 6. A sponge, 7. Puppies.

Riddles

1. c 2. c 3. a 4. c 5. a

Pick the right one

agnation, 4. Assassination.

II 1. Combination, 2. examination, 3. im-

4. veracity, 5. loquacity.

I 1. Electricity, 2. velocity, 3. sagacity,

Cities, Nations

atmospheric pressure.

charge, 7. Measures rainfall, 8. Measures

6. Shows the direction of the flow of electric

electric charge, 5. Controls resistance,

electric current, 4. Detects the presence of

sity of earthquakes, 3. Measures quantity of

1. Measures Humidity, 2. Records inten-

Instrument Quiz

Club.

officer in Japan, 9. The Everton Football

5. Mildeno, 6. Rosavelt, 7. X-rays, 8. Army

3. Sleeping sickness, 4. Sheriff's officer,

1. Helveta, 2. Finnish steam bath,

Test Your IQ

ANSWERS

PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

GIVEN below are the names of some of the boys and girls who have been newly enrolled as members of the CHILDREN'S WORLD PEN-FRIENDS CLUB. Each one of them has been given a membership number. The country in which the member desires to have pen-friends is shown within brackets. All members of our Pen-Friends Club should quote their membership number whenever they correspond with us and with each other. Members may choose their pen-friends from the list of names that will appear periodically.

2021 (C)
Amit Chopra (boy, age 11)
4/52 Roop Nagar,
Delhi 110007, India
Hobbies: Stamp-collecting, Reading
(Australia)

2022 (G)
Neenu Goyal (girl, 14)
19-A, Hind Street
Balaji Nagar
Madras 600014, India
Hobbies: Music, Postcards
(USSR, China, Japan)

2023 (V)
Usha Varghese (g, 5)
C/o Sqn. Ldr. M.P. Varghese, I.A.F.
P/173/3 Air Force Qtrs, Hebbal
Bangalore 6 India
Hobbies: Painting, Gardening
(Sri Lanka)

2024 (S)
Ashish M. Sheth (b, 12)
B1/11 Scindia Society
M.V. Road, Andheri East
Bombay 400069 India
Hobbies: Stamp-collecting
(Australia, U.K.)

2025 (D)
Monika Das (g, 13)
22A, Rash Behari Avenue
Calcutta 700026 India
Hobbies: Music, Reading
(U.K.)

2026 (T)
Aju Thomas (b, 12)
Honeeden
34/59 Krishnaswamy Cross Road
Ernakulam
Cochin 682011 India
Hobbies: Travel, Letter-writing
(Germany, Japan, U.S.A.)

2027 (R)
P. Raghu Raman (b, 12)
W-31, Green Park
New Delhi 110016 India
Hobbies: Coin-collecting
(U.S.A.)

2028 (B)
Basoki Nath Bhattacharya (b, 12)
3A/2 W.E.A., Karol Bagh
New Delhi 110005 India
Hobbies: Reading, Stamps
(France, U.K.)

2029 (J)
Sanjiv N. Jhaveri (b, 14)
Besant Aartie, Besant Street
2nd Floor, Block No. 12
Santacruz (West)
Bombay 400054 India
Hobbies: Stamps, Reading
(Japan)

2030 (S)
Sankrant Sanu (b, 9)
House No. 148/Sector 9B
Chandigarh 160009 India
Hobbies: Gardening, Match-labels
(Canada)

2031 (D)
Sanjay Das (b, 13)
Qr. No. C-3
Burla District
Sambalpur (Orissa) India
Hobbies: Science experiments, Reading
(U.S.A., Australia)

2032 (A)
Alpana Ansal (g, 12)
57 Jor Bagh
New Delhi 110003 India
Hobbies: Writing poetry, Stamps
(U.S.A.)

2033 (S)
Rakesh Sharma (b, 13)
Bhushan Bhawan
Teachers Colony
Gumanpura
Kota (Rajasthan) India
Hobbies: Coins, Stamps, Postcards
(Australia)

2034 (M)
Joanita Monteiro (g, 12)
1/1 Twinkle Star Society
Ghatla Road, Chembur
Bombay 400071 India
Hobbies: Stamp-collecting, reading
(W. Germany, U.S.A.)

2035 (D)
Jonathan S. De (b, 13)
"Banashree"
P.O. Jhargram
Midnapur Dt., West Bengal
India
Hobbies: Swimming, skating
(Australia, U.S.A.)

2036 (M)
Manisha Marwaha (g, 11)
High Commission of India
P.O. Box 882
Colombo-1 (Sri Lanka)
Hobbies: Dramatics, drawing, music
(Mexico, France)

2037 (S)
Edgar Silveira (b, 13)
Mangor Hill
Vasco-da-Gama (Goa)
India 403802
Hobbies: Stamps, viewcards
(Scandinavia, Monaco)

2038 (K)
Devendra Kalra (b, 14)
B-1/35-A Hauz Khas
New Delhi 110016 India
Hobbies: Photography, travel
(Holland, N. Vietnam)

2039 (S)
Aseel Sawhney (g, 12)
69 Friends Colony
New Delhi 110014 India
Hobbies: Singing, Dancing
(U.K., U.S.A.)

2040 (S)
Tej Soni (b, 13)
Deep Mandap
Agra Road, Mulund
Bombay 400080 India
Hobbies: Mechanics, Coin-collecting
(U.S.A.)

2041 (B)
Paresh V. Bheda (b, 11)
C/o Mr. V.R. Bheda
D-BZ-S-51 A
Gandhidham (Kutch) India
Hobbies: Stamp-collecting
(U.S.A.)

2042 (C)
Dipankar Chatterjee (b, 15)
C-2, Calico Residences
Bombay 400074 India
Hobbies: Stamp-collecting
(East/West Africa)

2043 (S)
Rameshwar Singh (b, 15)
C/o Lt. Col. Shiv Singh
A-69 Tilak Nagar
Jaipur-4 India
Hobbies: Swimming, tennis
(Sweden, Australia)

2044 (T)
Divya Tiwari (g, 11)
90/3 Park Road
Dehra Dun (U.P.) India
Hobbies: Painting, Stamps
(France)

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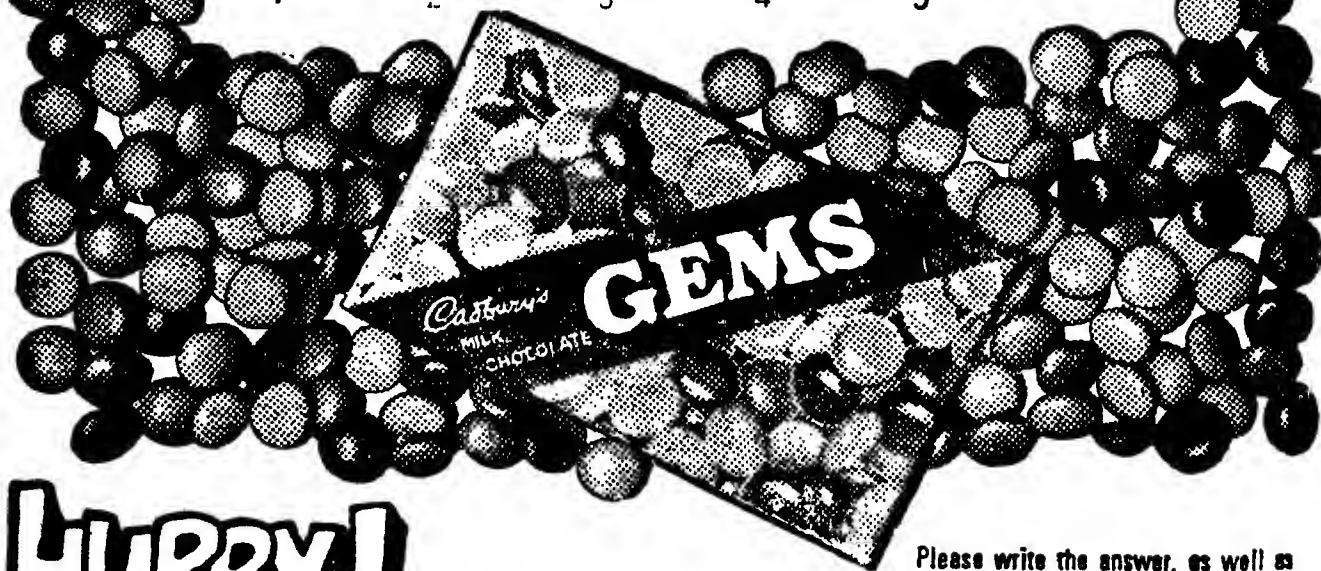
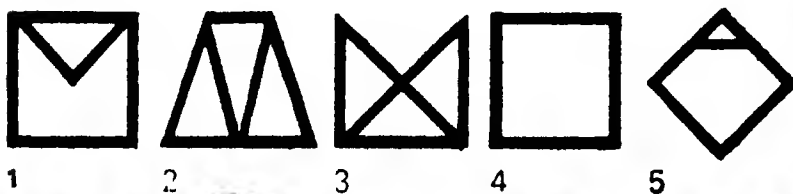
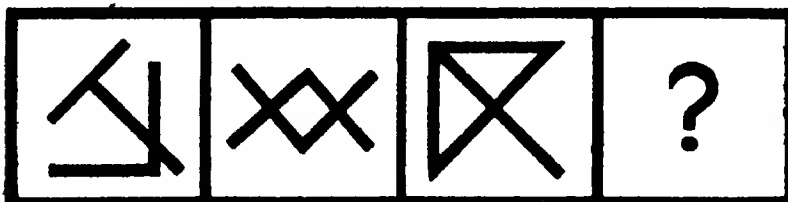
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VARIETY IN INDIAN STAMPS

A FEW recent Indian releases will be found reproduced as you turn over this page. These issues have themes varying from shipping to air travel, from earthquakes to the Red Cross, from Indian classics to India's national song, from International films to world environment, from flowers to fruits. Won't you like to know a little more about these colourful stamps?

Let's start with Children's Day, which was commemorated on November 14 last with a stamp carrying a painting by 10-year old Hansa D. Bhatia, based on a story from the *Panchatantra*. The theme for the Children's Day stamp was 'children's literature', and nothing else would have been more appropriate than a child's painting inspired by one of India's oldest classics. The story chosen by Hansa tells about a loyal mongoose, kept as a pet by a farmer's wife, who kills it in anger when she mistakes its blood-smeared appearance and doubts about some physical harm to her baby, without knowing that her pet has really saved her little one from a snake.

December 1 last saw a new flying bird in the Indian horizon. It was no migratory bird! Named A300 B2, but affectionately called Airbus, it had come to stay in the Indian skies. It was brought by the Indian Airlines, which hitherto flew only Boeing 737s, Caravelles, Viscounts, Avros, Fokker 'Friendships' and Dakotas. The Airbus can carry nearly 280 passengers besides 10 tonnes cargo. Can you now imagine what its inside will look like?

According to Indian classics, the coconut is the all-giving tree or 'kalpavriksha'. Each part of the tree has some use or other for mankind. It is grown in as many as 76 of the developing countries, and as such it is one of the most important tree crops of the world. You will be interested to know that the Indian State, KERALA, derives its name from the word 'kera' meaning coconut. India was the first country to take up research on coconut in a systematic way. And this was started as far back as 1916 in the Kasargod and Nilesliwar research stations — both located in Kerala. The stamp commemorating the Diamond Jubilee of research on coconut was issued on 27 December.

More than a hundred years ago, the well known Bengali novelist, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, composed a song which appeared in his novel *Anand Math*, later serialised in 1881. The song, beginning with the words 'Vande Mataram' (meaning 'I bow to thee, Mother') sung by the characters

in the novel, personifies the motherland as the Mother Goddess. They know no other deity excepting the motherland and no other religion excepting that of patriotism. This immortal song soon started echoing from the throats of millions of Indian men and women fighting for the freedom of their motherland. The British rulers were alarmed at the unifying power of the song. They banned the singing of this song in schools, colleges, and public places. In August 1948, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said in the parliament. "*Vande Mataram* is obviously and indisputably the premier national song of India with a great historical tradition." The special stamp honouring the national song was released on Dec. 30.

Four days later came the Sixth International Film Festival of India in New Delhi, to last fourteen days. The Festival, the first one of which was held in 1952, with its Peacock Award, is considered as one of the seven major international film festivals in the world. (By the way, next to the USA, India produces the maximum number of feature films in the world.) The motto of the Indian festival reads in Sanskrit: '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*' ("the entire world one family"). One of its aims is to promote friendship and co-operation among different peoples of the world. The issue of the stamp synchronised with the inauguration of the Festival on January 3.

Another seven days, and India was hosting the Sixth World Conference on Earthquake Engineering, also in New Delhi. The Conference had special significance for India, because about 55 per cent of its area falls within the seismic zones. The Conference discussed the problems of earthquake hazards, like their prediction, mitigation of risk, design of various engineering structures for earthquake resistance, and rescue operations.

Of equal importance to India was the First Asian Regional Red Cross Conference in New Delhi from March 9. The 8-day Conference was a distinct landmark in the history of the Red Cross Movement in the Asian countries.

On April 5, 1919, an Indian steamship "Loyalty" sailed from Bombay to England, thus unfurling the flag of Indian shipping in international waters. The man behind this epic voyage was Narottam Morarjee, who had founded the Scindia Steam Navigation Company in March the same year. Son of a textile magnate, Narottam Morarjee was born on April 2, 1877. His early tutors, one of whom was Gopal Krishna Gokhale, instilled in

him a high sense of patriotism, and later in life he was also inspired by the wave of national resurgence generated by Mahatma Gandhi's gospel of Swaraj. On his death in 1928, Gandhiji said, "His latest enterprise... was conceived as much through patriotism as through ambition." Besides many other things, the Scindia company meant the opening of a career at sea for the Indian youth. The special stamp, issued on April 2, commemorated the birth centenary of this 'merchant prince', who had laid the foundations of modern Indian shipping.

June 5 is World Environment Day. Five years ago that day, the United Nations Conference on Human Environment took place in Stockholm, Sweden, to generate world-wide awareness of ecological and environmental problems, like pollution of air, water, and land, and rapid exhaustion of natural resources, such as minerals and forests.

(Continued from page 29)

the burkha over my head and lowered the veil. 'Don't worry,' he smiled again. 'Trust in Allah, Allah is great!'

"Well, there I sat, next to the young Egyptian girls, clad in a burkha and unable to do anything else but trust in Allah and the only friend in Alexandria—Mohamed Zadek.

"I heard him open the gate, and answer questions calmly but astonished. I heard them enter the room where I sat a minute ago, and then push open the door to the girls' room. And through my veil, I looked at them. Yes, there they were, the three men who had followed me from the sweet shop, who were after me and my good old yellow suitcase.

"The two young girls shrieked again and turned their faces away. So did I. My heart was beating very fast. I held my breath. I heard Mohamed answer their questions politely, showing no irritation. The door closed. I sat very still, like the two girls, breathing hard, thanking god, Allah, and the young boy, who just then entered the room. Smiling, he pulled the veil up and embraced me. 'They have gone, my friend. The danger is over.'

"We sat down in the drawing room and talked till it was time for me to go to the station, to catch the train to Cairo. Dressed in the same burkha, I followed him back through the same streets to the main

In his greed and ignorance, man interferes with nature's ways causing great damage to nature and himself. So, in his own long-term interest, man has to learn to live in harmony with nature.

Flowers are part of nature. They were there even before the birth of man. They filled him with awe and wonder, inspired him to compose songs and poems, and when they withered and fell, made him pause and reflect on life. India is the home of a large number of flowering plants. Almost any type of flowering plant would find a hospitable ecological haven, from the snow-clad Himalayas to the sun-washed Cape Comorin, from the sun-scorched plains of Rajasthan to the rain-drenched hills of Assam. Four of these flowers—the Lotus, Tree-Rhododendron, Kadamba, and the Gloriosa Lily—are featured in the colourful issues released on July 1.

road. I found it difficult to walk in the loose, long wrap. At times, I stepped on the hem, and nearly tripped but, fortunately, I did not fall. I was afraid that people might recognise me as a man, as the man whom they followed in the morning. We got into a bus and reached the station without exchanging many words. Only when we entered the platform, with the first class ticket to Cairo in my hand, did Mohamed Zadek take my hand from between the many folds of the burkha and shake it affectionately.

"Thank you so much,' I said. 'How can I ever return what you have done for me? And how can I return the burkha?'

"Keep it,' my friend smiled, 'and remember Alexandria and me without any hard feelings.'

"I will,' I said, deeply touched by his kindness. And then we embraced, kissing each other on each cheek, as is the custom in this country. People looked at us astonished, surprised.

"Take off the burkha when you are inside the compartment. Then you are safe. Nothing will happen to you.'

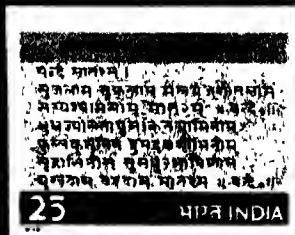
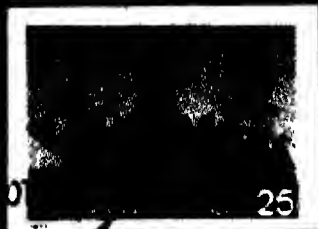
"But unfortunately, my friend Mohamed Zadek from Alexandria was wrong. Something did happen to me."

Sigrun Srivastava

(To be continued)

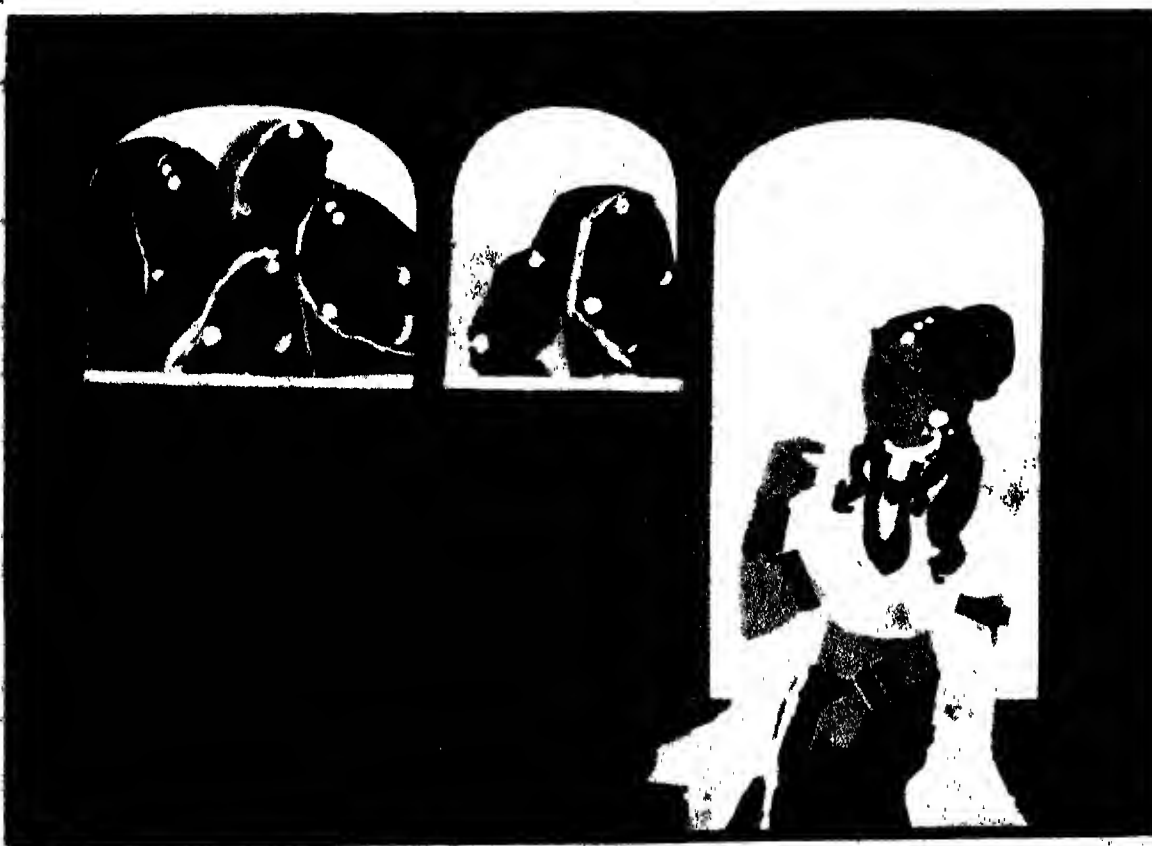
STAMPS FROM INDIA

(See story alongside)



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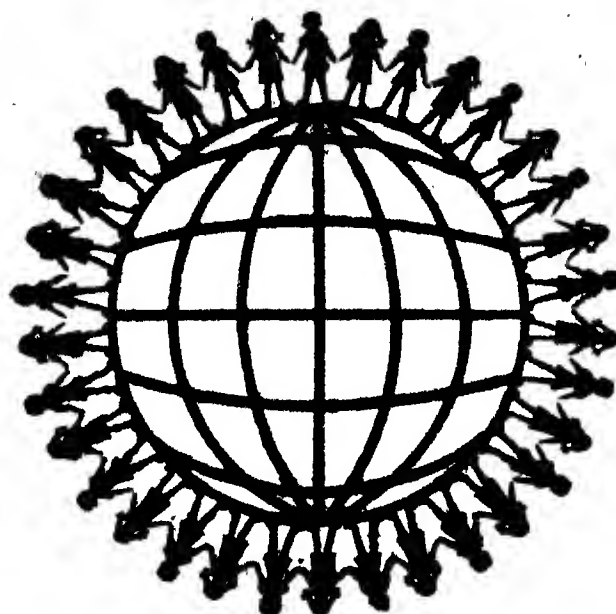
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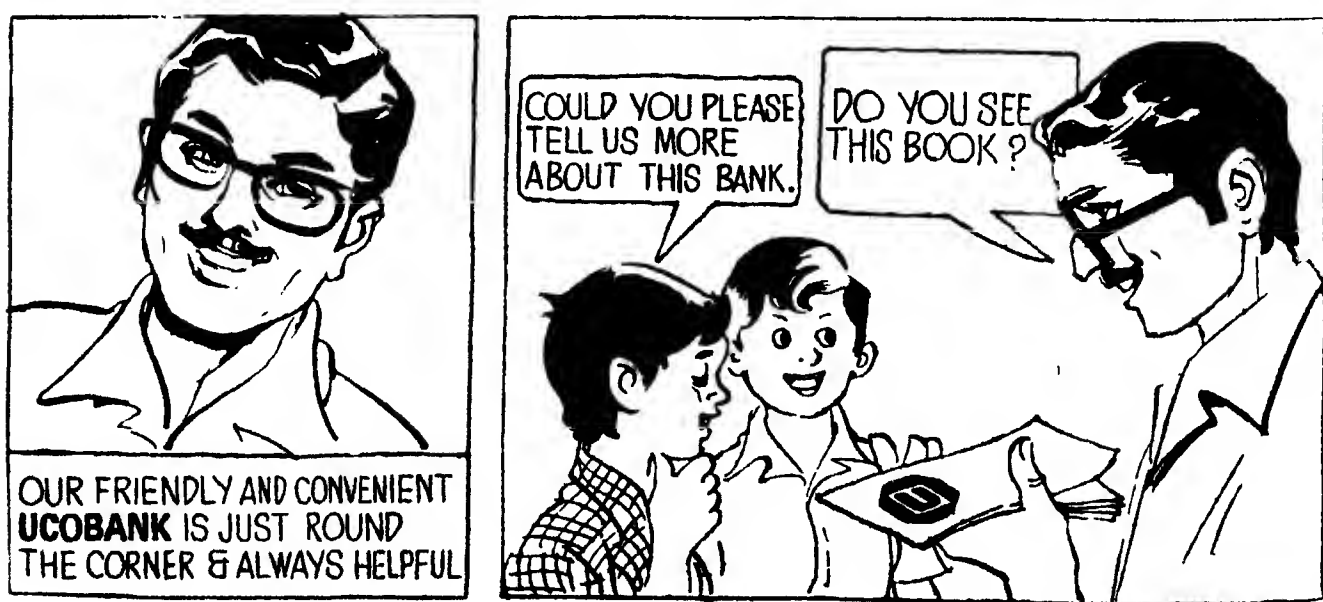
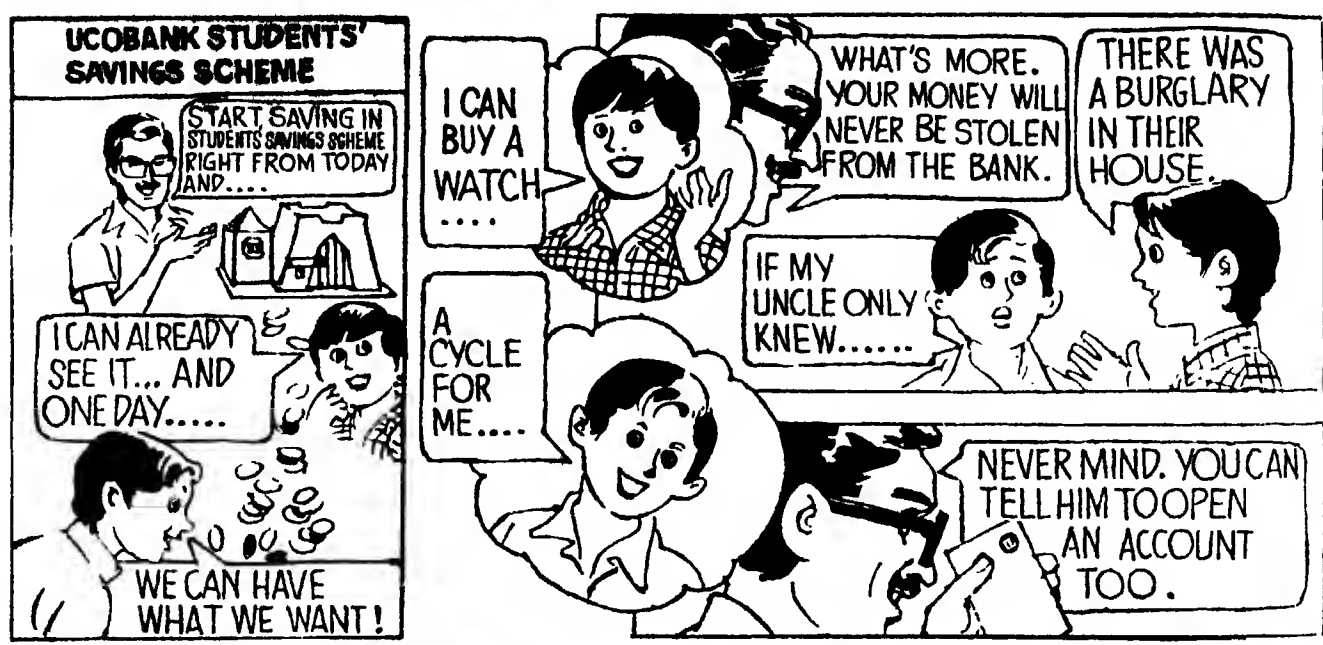
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Cover: "Perahara Procession" by Sumith Jayantha Fernando (13) Sri Lanka



(TO BE CONTINUED)

HUMOUR IN VERSE

IF

IF the world was square,
And all the parts were cold,
And the sun would rise at night-time,
And the moon would come in the morning,
If the birds flew wearing woollen clothes,
If the people worked with their legs,
I wonder how I'd feel.

Manisha Marwaha (11)
Sri Lanka

SCHOOL IS OVER!

SCHOOL'S over, school's over!
No French, no English, no Hindi to bother;
No more to stand on the rickety bench,
While in fury our fists do clench;
No more to stretch out our arm
For a shot, with a cane, on our palm;
No more to be prim and pry,
With shoes, socks, and a tie;
No more to be punished,
For not having finished,
An exercise in English;
No more to have such worries,
We now can do as we please.

T. S. Narayanan (13)
India

HISTORY

IF the Indus Valley people
Bathed in a pool,
What's so extraordinary?
They stayed nice and cool!
Poor little me, who bathes
In a tub,
Thousand years later
Will they say I was a dud?
Wish History were a mystery
Could have solved in just a day!
But 'tis plodding, plodding, plodding,
Even Teacher snores away!

Neeliraga
India

PAPA'S OBSESSION

PAPA'S got a funny habit
Verging on the absurd—
(I'm afraid it cannot be described

By any other word)
For whether he's at home,
In the office, or outside—
He always wants to know
If his shoes look all right.
He dusts them, he rubs them,
He really makes them shine,
But soon enough, he asks
If they weren't better last time!
At this, mama looks up,
In exasperation, from her book,
"They're perfectly alright,
As you'll see if you look!"
When I am suddenly faced
With a similar enquiry,
I say, without looking up,
"They're as good as they can be!"
But my silly little sisters—
They don't know what to say,
And instead remark truthfully,
"They were better yesterday!"
At this, there's a commotion,
And an enormous row,
While Papa repolishes them,
And says at last, "And now?"
Then, when we're on our way
To an important supper-party,
My father suddenly remarks,
"I hope my shoes aren't dusty?"
And at our negative reply,
He surveys them for a bit,
Then whipping out a hanky,
He wipes the shoes with it!

Minnie Singh (13)
India

JACK

THERE was once a boy called Jack,
Who never wore his mack,
It was always kept in his rack.
He never wore it out in the rain,
For, he said, it got wet out in the lane,
So, you see, he wasn't completely sane.
He always got wet,
He scowled at everyone he met,
And afterwards he did fret!

Namita Oberoi (10)
India



Ritin's Good Luck!

"MUMMY, I don't want to go to school," Ritin cried.

"Any reason?" Mummy asked, suspiciously.

Ritin always came out with some good excuse, but this time he had none. He fumbled for words. "I-I have not prepared for my test," he blurted out.

"Well, if you had to go to that birthday party yesterday, you should have prepared for the test in the afternoon," she said sternly, while sipping her tea. "Now get ready fast; your school bus is due in fifteen minutes."

Ritin then tried to seek his father's help, but he diplomatically hid himself behind the newspaper!

"But, Mummy, it's going to rain madly and I've a bad cold," he still tried to plead. For a reply, he got a stern look and no more!

So, Ritin took the hint and timidly scurried off to get ready. He was immaculate in dressing and, in exactly six minutes, he was all ready for school. His glass of milk was waiting for him on the dining table. He picked up his lunch box and said a sullen good-bye to his parents.

Ritin did not give up so easily. "Daddy, look, it has started raining," he said hopefully and turned back from the door.

"Well, put on your raincoat," came the reply from Mummy.

That was the last resort, and he had lost. So, he put on his raincoat and walked out into the rain. By the time he settled down in the bus for the long ride to school, Ritin's shoes were soaking wet and so were his socks. He even sneezed a couple of times. But nothing bothered him more than the thought of giving his test. What was he going to write? Not only had he not prepared, his mind was absolutely blank. And he sneezed once again.

The bus was filling up with the school children and the noise inside was also increasing. The conductor was pleading with some of them to shut the windows. But they seemed to like the rain streaming down on their faces. Ritin did not have a window seat, but the rain didn't spare him. Some small children, who hated getting wet, had begun crying and were being consoled by the senior girls. The rain had increased and the driver was finding it

difficult to drive the bus as visibility was poor. Water splashed on either side as the bus found its way along the road. The poor driver was receiving curses from the cyclists and the pedestrians.

And then it happened. The bus approached Tilak Bridge. The underway had knee-deep water. A couple of cars had got stalled and some urchins were pushing them quite merrily. It seemed as though it was going to be roaring business for them, since they collected enough tips for their labour. The bus driver yelled out to the noisy kids to calm down as he would need full concentration to manoeuvre the bus through deep waters. Silence was soon restored, and some boys strained their heads out of the windows to watch the bus wading into the water. It was quite a long patch and the driver raised the gear and drove slowly. So far so good. They had reached half-way into the water when the engine suddenly spluttered and groaned and stopped dead. Water had got into the engine. The driver made some vain attempts to start the bus, but the fate of the bus seemed to have been sealed.

The rain had by then become steady and it was no use trying to push the bus. The first reaction of the children was to shout "Hurrah!" Nothing further could be done till the rain subsided. So, everyone had to sit back and relax. But 'relax' was not a known word to the school children. The commotion started all over again. "I want to go home," whimpered a little girl. "I might miss my class test," said a serious-looking boy regretfully, as he pushed up his specs and shut his book.

Ritin also had the same reaction but it was a happy one. Maybe he too had a chance of missing his test? It was in the third period, and the way the rain poured, it didn't seem as if they would reach school on time. The driver and the conductor were discussing how they could contact the school. When the rain subsided a little, one of them would walk across to a nearby office and ring up the school people. They would arrange to send a relief bus. All this would surely take time, and the third period would be over, thought Ritin with relief.

The rain had subsided a bit and the con-

ductor had waded through the water to go and contact the school. Many onlookers stared at the school children. The senior students had started singing and the others soon joined in. "I wish it would happen like this everyday," said one excited girl.

The conductor soon returned with real good news. The school was sending another bus and the children were to be dropped back to their homes! The rain clouds loomed as dark as before and with the incessant rain it might be difficult to send everyone back. Moreover, the school gates were also under knee-deep water.

Some of the children opened their lunch boxes and began munching their snacks. After all, they were going to have a holiday! And so, the bus became a picnic resort, and they exchanged their food and talked in high pitched tones. The driver also switched on his radio and provided music.

Ritin was one of the happiest boys in the bus. No test—exactly what he had wanted! In spite of the dull day, it was bright for Ritin.

The relief bus came in a short while and the bus full of children was pushed out of the flooded bridge with the help of the urchins and some passersby. The children then clambered into the other bus, all set to go back home.

Can you imagine the look on Ritin's mother's face when she saw him walk into the house?

Alaka Shankar

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The Nawab's Mahabharata

“YOU look depressed, Sire,” commented Gopal the jester, looking at the downcast face of the king of Bengal. “May I ask what the matter is?”

“Indeed, you may,” said the king, “in fact you must, for I am badly in need of advice.”

“I can see that,” said Gopal in his usual cheerful voice. “I do not like wasting my jokes on long faces.”

“Long faces!” cried the king. “You talk of long faces! Do you know that, in a few hours time, I may not have any face at all, long or otherwise!”

“Surely, things are not as bad as all that?” said Gopal becoming serious. “What

has happened? Is it the Nawab, again?”

“It certainly is,” groaned the king. “Oh, how I wish he wasn’t so very whimsical. He keeps on asking for the impossible. I am only a king. I cannot do everything under the sun, can I?”

“Well, what does he want this time? Please tell me. I’m sure I can help,” said Gopal.

“You?” said the king. “It is totally beyond your abilities, clever though you may undoubtedly be.”

Gopal sat in silence. But he was by no means disheartened. He was extremely clever and had helped the king in various ways in the past. He had been of great



help to his fellow men as well. There was that old Ramdas who had been cheated of his dues. Had not Gopal sought an ingenious way of convincing the king that the poor man should be paid his money? When the Nawab of Murshidabad had wanted the world to be measured, had not Gopal obliged in his inimitable way? Had he not also coaxed money out of old miserly Aunt by carrying lobsters in his pocket? Why, then, did the king doubt his ability now?

"You are silent, Gopal," said the king. "I have not known you to do that before."

"No, your Majesty," said Gopal, "nor have I known you doubt my ability before."

"It is not quite that," said the king, apologetically. "What I feel is that even you are incapable of doing the impossible."

"But what is this impossible task? Do at least tell me, and let me decide if it is beyond me or not," said Gopal.

"The Nawab wants a second Mahabharata to be written," said the king in a solemn voice.

"A second Mahabharata, Sire?" asked Gopal, unable to believe his ears. "You mean a second copy of the great book?"

"I mean nothing of the sort," said the king in a cross voice. "I knew right from the beginning that it is totally beyond your comprehension. The Nawab wants a Mahabharata to be written on him. On HIM. Do you understand, now?"

"Is that all?" asked Gopal, relief dawning all over his face. "And you're worried over this simple thing!"

"Simple is it, you simpleton!" cried the king in an angry voice. "Have you any idea as to who wrote the Mahabharata and how lengthy an epic it is? Simple indeed! You must be crazy!"

"I know that it was Vedavyasa who wrote the Mahabharata, but so can I! And as for its length, you just leave it all to me."

"Gopal," said the king, "I admit that you're my favourite jester, but this at least is not a matter for jesting."

"But I'm not jesting, Sire," said Gopal, "I mean it quite seriously. I can write the Mahabharata to suit the Nawab."

"I don't see how you can," said the king, leaning on his velvet pillow. "You are a barber by caste and you've had no education."

"Nevertheless I am quite equal to the task," said Gopal with confidence. "So, you may send word to the Nawab that his orders shall be carried out shortly, but I must have some money. Five thousand rupees, to start with."

"But, Gopal," said the king, "do you really know what you are talking about? I don't care to make a fool of myself, not before the Nawab."

"Have you ever known me to fail you before?" protested Gopal.

"No," said the king, after a few moments' pause. "Not that I can remember."

"Have faith in me, your Majesty," said Gopal, "you will not regret it."

So the king of Bengal sent word to the Nawab of Murshidabad that a Mahabharata featuring the Nawab was being written, but as it was an expensive and extensive job, the author would require five thousand rupees.

The Nawab's messenger turned up the very next day carrying five muslin bags. Each contained a thousand glittering silver coins. "The Nawab's compliments to the author," said the messenger, "but he is in a hurry. Ask the man not to sleep over the job. The Nawab must have it soon."

"Very well," said the king, "I will convey the Nawab's message to the author."

The messenger left soon afterwards, but he carried the king's peace of mind. How, he argued for himself, could a barber write an epic? What a fool he had been to let Gopal sway him so easily! And the Nawab's temper was nothing short of legendary! He was in for it now and no mistake; the king cursed himself as he walked the palace sleeplessly.

The next morning he sent for Gopal. "How are you getting on, Gopal?" he asked anxiously. "Do you think there is any hope of your being able to do it? Or shall I go and confess to the Nawab and beg his pardon? He will not forgive me if he realises later on that we've tricked him."

"There is no trick," said Gopal putting on an innocent face, "I am getting on with



the job. Please have faith in me."

Gopal had a gala time with the Nawab's money and did not appear to do any work at all. Months rolled by. The king grew uneasy and the Nawab became impatient. He sent a messenger asking how much longer the author was going to take. The king sent for Gopal in a hurry.

"It's nearly done, Sire," said Gopal. "But I must have two thousand rupees more."

"But you've taken five thousand already!" said the king. "That's a huge amount. I don't see how you can ask for more."

"I'm sure the Nawab will not agree to give you more," said the messenger.

"But it's a colossal task!" said Gopal. "A big job means a big amount. How can the Nawab have a satisfactory epistle if he stints over money? I would not have undertaken the job if I had known that I'd lack funds."

The messenger went back to Murshidabad and returned with the money the next day. "Here it is," he said to the king, "but the Nawab asked me to tell you that he must have the Mahabharata in seven days' time, or it shall be death for the lot of you."

The king summoned Gopal without a moment's delay. "Alas!" he said, "we are in for it now!"

"In for what?" said Gopal, pretending to be surprised.

"Death, you fool! DEATH! And it's all due to you! How I wish I had never listened to you," said the king bitterly.

"Don't worry yourself unnecessarily," said Gopal, "I'm going to see the Nawab tomorrow and all will be well."

"Well, it certainly shall be for you," said the king sarcastically, "for I assure you, you're not coming back alive."

Gopal started for Murshidabad the next day, dressed like a pundit. He carried a sheaf of papers under his arm. The Nawab was both pleased and surprised to know that the author of his Mahabharata was already at his doorstep.

"I suppose that messenger of mine had frightened you, hey?" said the Nawab to Gopal. "Well, I could have certainly waited another week."

"You will have it in a week's time, my

lord," said Gopal. "I came to see you because I wanted a few details. The Mahabharata cannot be complete without them."

"What details do you want?" asked the Nawab, looking highly gratified. "I thought my entire life was public property! What is it that you do not know about my brave deeds?"

"It's not *your* brave deeds, lord," said Gopal meekly, "but a few details about the Begum."

"What details do you need about her?" said the Nawab frowning. "It's about ME that I want you to write."

"Of course, my lord. You are undoubtedly the hero of the book, but you must understand that a great epic must have a heroine, too. The heroine of the Mahabharata is Draupadi. Now, she had five husbands. I would, therefore, like to have the names of the four other husbands of your Begum."

"Toba! toba!" cried the Nawab in horror. "A man may have as many wives as he chooses, but for a woman to have more than one spouse—how can you speak of such a sinful thing?"

"But, my lord, Draupadi *did* have five husbands. It's all in the Mahabharata. It is absolutely essential that our Begum

should also have five husbands, otherwise I don't see how another Mahabharata can be written. At least, I can't do it," said Gopal rather stubbornly.

"You've got to," said the Nawab. "The king of Bengal had promised to provide a Mahabharata about me."

"I'm ready to do it, my lord," said Gopal. "In fact, it is all but done, but it has got to have five heroes and a heroine, or it won't be a Mahabharata."

"I don't want such a Mahabharata, you rogue!" cried the Nawab. "Now take yourself off before I order you to be beheaded!"

"But, my lord, I had taken such pains over it!" said Gopal, in a hurt voice. "I was sure of being rewarded with a few thousands at least! Now all my labours are wasted!"

"Oh, very well!" said the Nawab. "Take a couple of thousands if nothing else will satisfy you, but for heaven's sake get lost and quick...before the Begum gets to hear of your sinful ideas!"

Gopal took the two thousand rupees, thanked the Nawab, and left for his home, making up his mind to persuade the king of Bengal to reward him, too!

Swapna Dutta

A MORNING WALK

As I stood on top of a mountain,
I saw below me a lovely sight.
The birds were twittering,
The dew was glittering—
On the petals of flowers,
On the little green leaves,
On the blades of grass,
And the stumps of trees.

As I stood on top of a mountain,
I heard around me some lovely sounds,
The cock was crowing,
The hens were clucking,
The cow was mooing,
And the horses were neighing.

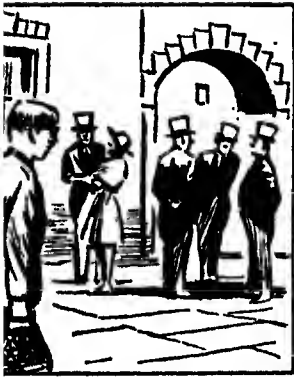
As I went towards the farm,
Nursing the little scratch on my arm,
I saw that the farmers were watering
The plants that were dry,
For the sun was already up in the sky.

The dogs barked at me,
The birds were scared of me,
And the cat ran away from me.

As the farmer passed by,
He told me that this was no time to roam,
And so I slowly went back home.

*Poonam Krishnan (11)
India*

FAMOUS ARTISTS-I:



WHEN Stanley Spencer, the eccentric British artist, went to Buckingham Palace to be knighted, he arrived in a lounge suit carrying a string shopping bag! He made a queer sight among the distinguished men in frock coats and top hats, who had also come there to be honoured.

Stories about the 5' 2" (158cm) Sir Stanley and his bag (it held medicines and a little picture he had painted for the Queen Mother) appeared in the newspapers. Indeed, the unconventional little man was always good 'copy' for newspapers. He used to push his painting gear about in an old perambulator.

Spencer was born in 1891 at Cookham, a Thames-side village, which exerted a sort of mystical influence on him all his life and was the setting of many of his controversial religious pictures. He haunted its churchyard and the banks of the river with his sketchbook and paints.

He made the churchyard the scene for one of his strangest visionary pictures, "*The Resurrection, Cookham*", showing people rising from the graves. He painted it under difficult conditions in a studio in London, sometimes holding his baby daughter as he worked.



THEN, when the huge canvas (9ft×18ft) was finished — he had worked on it for four years — he found that it would not go through the door. Help was summoned, and it had to be edged through the high studio window and carefully lowered by means of ropes to the ground.

Crowds thronged the gallery where it was put on exhibition, and Spencer was kept busy trying to explain it to the visitors. Eventually, it was bought by the Contemporary Art Society, who paid the artist £1,000 for it and presented it to the Tate Gallery.

Spencer was always scruffy. Once, a bearded man tried to tip him for carrying his bag to London's famous Slade School of Art. Soon afterwards, he was amazed to recognise Spencer in the student to whom he was presenting one of the Slade's top awards!

During the First World War (1914-18), Spencer volunteered as a medical orderly in the British army. The distinguished artist cheerfully did menial tasks, like scrubbing hospital floors. He would delight patients by sketching them and giving them the drawings.

STANLEY SPENCER



WHEN he was sent overseas to the front in Macedonia, he volunteered as a fighting soldier. He saved the life of an officer, who was wounded when they were alone on an advanced patrol. Ignoring flying bullets, he bandaged the officer's neck, then went and fetched a stretcher party.

Back home on leave, at the end of the war, he found, leaning against his bedroom wall, a river Thames scene he had left unfinished when he joined the army. He set to work with his old fervour finished it, and sold it for £ 100, a fortune compared with his army pay.

Using a stable as a studio, Spencer now began to paint an official war picture, 6ft×7ft, showing the wounded being brought to a dressing station. While he was busy at it, he was visited by the military police, who came to arrest him for overstaying his leave. He produced a pass. The 'red-caps' then withdrew.

Spencer's inspiration came from odd sources. His "*St. Francis and the Birds*" (a legend from the saint's life) was a memory of how his father, after his trousers were stolen, went out in Cookham in a dressing gown. In the picture Mr. Spencer's dressing gown became St. Francis's habit.



WHILE Spencer is popularly remembered for his visionary religious paintings, he was also a fine landscape artist. He would trudge miles, pushing his perambulator about the countryside. His landscapes, in contrast to his other work, are faithful reflections of what he saw.

During the Second World War (1939-45), he did some notable official paintings of shipyard scenes on the River Clyde at Port Glasgow, Scotland. He stayed in a boarding house and lived among the workers. The busy town fascinated him, too. He sat sketching in the streets.

If Spencer had not made painting his career,

he might well have become a noted musician. He had an astonishing memory for music; once he had heard a piece, he could play it himself on the piano. After painting, or talking of paintings, he loved best to play the piano.

He loved Cookham until the end of his life, which came in 1959. The year before, an exhibition of his paintings was held in the church there, which drew thousands of visitors. He himself was on show, in a way, standing in the churchyard and painting while he talked to the viewers!

(Courtesy : BIS)



A CLOUD'S TALE

I BELONG to that heavenly region from where I get an absolutely unobstructed view of what goes on in the world below. I roam about freely in the vast expanse of the sky, a silent witness to the events taking place in all places and climes. Forgive me, if you think I am being loud-mouthed in announcing that I am the lord and master of all I survey!

I am perhaps a nonentity as far as many people are concerned. Only a handful of persons called the meteorologists look at me and study me with keen interest. They would probably bore you with details of what I am made up of, which is very simple. My tissues are formed of that rather airy substance called vapour and sometimes of ice particles, too. Oh, how I sometimes long to shed my burden in great sheets of cooling rain! I inhabit the atmosphere in three well-defined layers, and my learned friends would tell you that I possess a string of names that are real tongue-twisters, like Cirrocumulus, Cumulonimbus, and so on.

Occasionally, I feel a twinge of sorrow about my very ordinary appearance. I do not make heads turn in admiration, but I am beautiful in an unassuming way. Look at me, basking in regal splendour every day

when the sun rises and sets. I am splashed with colour, but the sun insists that I thrive on his reflected glory. We are arch rivals. Much to his great discomfort, I always play hide-and-seek with the sun. He cannot scorch the earth with his merciless rays when I hide him from view. The moon is more accommodating and friendly.

I am generally a very pleasant sort of fellow. But I swiftly change roles during the monsoon. Thunder, accompanied by forks of lightning, booms in my boiling bosom, and then I loosen a pounding shower on the earth. Everyone is now anxiously aware of my movements, because my arrival is heralded by rain which causes floods in some places. Sometimes I fail to show up at all, and then people swelter in the heat and drought follows.

I am content with my lot. I travel a great deal, borne on the wings of the wind. I live in undisturbed peace for most part of the time, except when those monsters from earth, the aeroplanes, disturb my siesta.

My pattern of life is unchanging. "Men may come and men may go, but I go on forever."

Lakshmi Mohan

To Chase a Rainbow...

IT WAS still raining but, in tune with the magic that was filling the world, there was a rainbow stretching across the sky in all its splendour and glory.

I clasped my hands together and was sighing for the sheer, pure beauty of the whole world, when Bean burst in, his hair ruffled and wet, his eyes sparkling and excited.

"C'mon," he ordered, grabbing my hand and pulling me off the verandah on to the wet grass, into the rain.

Bean was never a man of many words. Knowing only too well the futility of asking him where in the world he was taking me, I ran along with him in the deliciously cool rain.

Oh yes, there was magic in the air that day... the rain, the birds singing merrily in spite of it, and the sun's little rays that kept escaping the great, grey clouds and running to earth, laughing and sparkling in iridescent joy through the golden greenery of the old Neem tree. And there was magic—and a sort of promise, too—in the excitement that flowed to me from Bean, through his hand, which lightly clasped mine. We ran on and on, towards the rainbow—over wet green grass and a few fallen leaves, between trees and tiny wild flowers smiling at the sky.

And, finally, we came to a lovely little place under the sun where I had never been before.

"Look," said Bean, and I looked.

I'd never seen anything like it.



Two old, old Neems which had grown up side by side through the years. Millions of tiny tufts of wild green grass sprung up all over...and the rainbow..

It seemed to spring out of Mother Earth between the trees. Like a sheet of soft, coloured smoke spirals. And it reached out into the sky...the music of bird-song to the tune of the pattering raindrops seemed to echo the magic, the little thrills running through me as I held my breath and pressed Bean's hand, looking into his excited face.

"Magic," he whispered. "Just magic."

I wanted to say so much in whole-hearted agreement, but I could only nod mutely. And hold Bean's hand even tighter as we walked towards the rainbow.

It was still drizzling and the birds were singing when we took our first step on the rainbow. And before we knew it, we were running on the rainbow, exuberant, ecstatic, our hearts soaring with some kind of indescribable, strange, magical feeling...

"Wow!" said Bean, closing his eyes and laughing a little. Even his laughter sounded magical and musical. "It's so beautiful, this way. You know what? I'd forgotten about the pot of gold."

And, suddenly, I realized I'd forgotten about it, too...because gold seemed so unimportant when the whole world was bursting with beauty...the only gold worth finding would be Eternity in the palms of our hands....

The rainbow stretched endlessly on in its seven-colour glory, and Bean and I ran on and on, forgetting home, forgetting time, forgetting the world....

And, suddenly, it was over. We had run the rainbow! And...and there we stood, at the other end of the rainbow, waist-deep in strange and lovely yellow flowers, and it was still raining. Pouring liquid crystal. And it was still very, very beautiful.

I looked at Bean, and we laughed, just laughed. Because it was so exciting, so new, so wonderful, and we didn't know what else to do. "Look," said Bean, pointing, "the pot of gold!"

It looked just like the pictures. Round and with a big handle. Made of copper, and so big that two Beans could have sat

in it. It was covered, with a lid.

"You open it," ordered bossy Bean, giving me a push.

"No," I faltered. I was kind of scared and I laughed a little, nervously. "You do it."

Bean always was braver than I. So he sighed reluctantly, scornfully, but affectionately, muttered "scaredy-cat" and strode towards the pot and threw it open....

Peanut butter and perfume. Polar bears and igloos and Eskimo seven-year olds playing snowball. Teddy bears and tadpoles, teepees and totem poles. Leprechauns hopping around singing Ramiah and Rapunzel combing her hair. Thumbelina and her Prince sitting on a rose and a Viking fighting a bull. Stuart Little steering a gondola and Pippa smelling sandalwood 'agarbatti'. Wilbur and Charlotte riding a ferris wheel and Queen Victoria eating pink cotton candy with her fingers. Flowers and raindrops, sunshine and snowmen.

Without a word, Bean replaced the lid. Then he took my hand and we started sailing back home on the rainbow. Right at the top we stopped and sat down, dangling our feet and looking at the wonderful world around us. It was still raining, it was still magic, it was more beautiful than ever. The monsoon breeze blew soft and cool and lifted our hair and caressed our cheeks. I wasn't plump and ugly anymore. I was beautiful and I felt like the queen of the world. We could have sat there for ever, Bean and I, on top of the rainbow.

Then Bean said it. The answer to the unspoken question. The significance...the meaning...of today....

He laughed. Just laughed.

"I got it," he said, taking my hand and laughing some more. "The world is a pot of gold."

Then we both started laughing, and the world echoed with the wonderful sound. We laughed and we couldn't stop. So we didn't try, and we slid down the rest of the rainbow till it was home.

We chased the rainbow. We came back home.

But the magic lingers on....

Minnie P. Swami

UNCLE MOHAN ON THE TRAIN TO CAIRO

(Uncle Mohan was telling us—Ramu and I—how, during his stopover in Alexandria, he encountered some ruffians, who tried to snatch away his old yellow suitcase from him, and how, with the help of young Mohamed Zadek, he disguised himself in a 'burkha' to slip away to the station to catch his train for Cairo. He thought he would be safe once he was inside the compartment, but...)

"I STEPPED into the train to Cairo and looked for an empty compartment, where I could take off my burkha and relax. But all the compartments were nearly fully occupied, with just a few seats left. And more people were pushing their way in. I decided to enter the one where two seats were still vacant.

"May I sit down?' I asked a red-faced lady to the left.

"She gave me a startled look, but nodded her head. I pushed my good old yellow suitcase into the luggage rack above the seat and sat down, carefully arranging the enormous fulness of the burkha pleats.

"Through the embroidered veil, I looked at my co-passengers. There was a tall, big-bellied man, with a round face, a large hooked nose, and sparkling brown eyes. He wore a big Mexican hat with two leather strings which were held together by a couple of beads. He sat relaxed near the window, smoking a big cigar. Next to him two silent Egyptians sat very erect, their hands fully covered by the sleeves of their kaftan. Opposite were two Egyptian ladies, dressed in burkhas, like mine.



"The lady next to me took out a little hand fan and started fanning herself. 'Phew!' she murmured, 'It is very hot. I should have never left England.'

"I couldn't help but smile. Soon we heard the whistle blow, the train was set in motion, and we left the station, left Alexandria behind, and were on our way to Cairo.

"I leaned back and relaxed. My thoughts went back to Mohamed Zadek, who helped me to leave Alexandria safely. The only thing left to do was to take off the burkha and become myself again, inwardly and outwardly. So, I got up and excused myself. 'I have to change,' I murmured, and asked the lady next to me to keep my seat.

"In the washroom, I took off the burkha, combed my hair, and returned to the compartment with the folded burkha under my arm.

"As I pushed the door open, the two Egyptian ladies looked up at me, then back out of the window. I smiled at the man with the cigar, thanked the lady next to me, and was about to sit down when she said, 'Excuse me, sir, this seat is taken.'

"It is taken?' I asked puzzled. 'But I was sitting here before.'

"You were sitting here before?' she asked, and looked me up and down.

"Sure,' I said, and laughed a little uncomfortably, and to reassure myself, I looked up at the luggage rack where I had kept my suitcase. And, indeed, it was still there.

"Of course,' I said confidently, 'there is my suitcase.'

"But, young man, excuse me, that suitcase can't belong to you, for it belongs to a tall Egyptian lady, who just left for a wash.'

"Tall Egyptian lady! By Jove, I should have thought of it earlier. Here, I was right back in trouble.

"Excuse me, lady,' I said, 'I know it is difficult to believe, but there was no tall Egyptian lady. It was me! I had to wear a burkha as disguise.'

"The red-faced lady stopped fanning

herself. She looked at me closely and frowned.

"Listen, young man,' she said. 'This is not the place nor the time for bad jokes. Neither are we in the Wild West of America, where such things happen. I'm sure you've entered the wrong compartment. It would be wise to leave immediately.'

"She stopped frowning at me and started fanning herself again.

"Si, hombre,' said the man with the cigar from his seat next to the window.

"Madam, Sir,' I said very calmly, 'I know it is difficult to believe, but please believe me. I had to wear this burkha. Please look at it closely and tell me whether it is the same as the one you saw the tall Egyptian lady wearing.'

"All of them looked at me, even the two Egyptian ladies. I unfolded the burkha and held it in front of me. Peering over the headpiece in front of my chin, I looked at all of them enquiringly.

"Caramba,' said the man by the window and scratched his head. 'It looks to be the same.'

"Yes, indeed,' said the red-faced English lady. The two Egyptians put their heads together and started to talk softly, looking at me off and on.

"Now, gentlemen,' I said, afraid that they might have seen me running through the streets of Alexandria in the morning, 'I have nothing to hide.'

'But, can you prove that this suitcase is yours?' inquired the man with the big cigar.

"Well,' I said, uncertainly, 'yes, of course, I can. It has my ticket from Mombassa to India, two pairs of socks, a tie....'

"Well, amigo,' laughed the man with the big cigar, 'just show us the ticket, the rest is okay.'

"I opened the suitcase and pulled out what I had defended so bravely, my ticket back to India. First, I handed it to the lady at the left. She looked at it for a long time.

"Well, Mr. Patel, you sure land yourself in strange situations,' she said.

"I nodded gravely.

"'Carambal' exclaimed the man with the cigar. 'What was the carnival about?'"

"I sat down and told them what happened to me in Alexandria."

"'Oh, Mr. Patel,' cried the English lady, after I had finished. 'How I feel for you. Surely, you must be thirsty and hungry after such a dreadful event. Come, please accept these crackers. Or, would you rather like some hot tea?'"

"'Ah, amigo!' said the man with the cigar, 'come, you must have a drink. Take it from this bottle, best Jamaican rum.'"

"I had a good sip of the rum from the bottle and, to please the lady, I took some dry crackers, too."

"The two Egyptians had listened to all that we said, but they had not spoken a word. Now one of them stood up and spoke in clear, careful English. 'I am sorry for what had happened to you in Alexandria. I am very ashamed. Please accept my apologies on behalf of my country.' He then crossed his arms in front of his chest and bowed."

"'Ah, caramba,' said the man with the cigar. 'These things happen, happen all over the world. They happen in Mexico, too, but that does not mean that we Mexicans are all bad, nor does it mean that all Egyptians are bad. Relax, young man,



GLOSSARY

Si, hombre	= yes, stranger
Caramba	= oh !
Amigo	= friend
Amigo, mio	= my friend
Basta	= that's it !
Nada	= nothing
Adios	= good-bye
Buena suerte	= good luck

here have a sip from my bottle. Best Jamaican rum."

"I had another sip. Then one of the Egyptians took the bottle and delicately sipped at it. He smiled at all of us and handed it to his friend, who gave it to the English lady."

"'Yes, madam,' cried the man with the cigar, 'cheers to Egypt!'"

"The English lady frowned. She was about to refuse, but looking at the smiling faces of the two Egyptians, she drank a bit and coughed and laughed and coughed again."

"In the meanwhile, the two Egyptian ladies had opened a cane basket, taken a lot of sweets out of it, and offered them to all of us."

"'Caramba!' cried the man with the cigar. 'The problem is that we don't speak the same language, otherwise, there would be few problems in this world. And, now to you, young man,' he said and looked at me, 'never carry your valuables inside your suitcase. Look, do you know where I have my ticket back to Mexico? Here!' He pulled down his beads, took off his hat, and showed us a small pocket with a zip. 'And since I will be back in Mexico tomorrow and you will have many more days of travelling before you, come here, amigo mio, take this hat and take good care of it, so that it will take care of you.'"

"He pulled out his valuables from the pocket inside the hat, took my ticket from my hand, kept it where his own ticket had been, and pushed the hat on my head!"

when he attacked and destroyed the Ottoman garrisons on both banks of the river Danube. His success brought him wide fame throughout Europe. No wonder he is one of the most important personalities in Rumanian history.

But in no place is Vlad the Impaler, as he was also known, regarded as being a vampire. A vampire is defined as being a ghost that leaves his grave at night and sucks the blood of sleeping persons. The concept of vampire was not alien to Europe and, in fact, was present in the folklore of ancient Greece and Rome. But there is no recorded evidence of Count Dracula ever having indulged in vampirism. He was in no way regarded as being a supernatural being. He was merely a very cruel king.

Perhaps the person who came closest to being qualified as a vampire was Countess Elizabeth Bathory, a high society lady of Hungarian origin, who lived in the 16th century, in a castle in the foothills of the Carpathians. It is said that she murdered over 650 virgins. She used the blood of these young girls to bathe herself, so as to stave off old age and retain her beauty.

So we find that the real Dracula was quite different from the literary Dracula. It is possible that Bram Stoker had based his fictitious character on the real Count Dracula. But he cleverly mixed historical facts with fiction and transformed the traditionally cruel king into a vampire. And by choosing the mysterious Transylvanian

regions for the setting of his horror fiction, he created a novel that was an instant success.

As long as man's fascination with the supernatural continues, the vampire myth will continue to be exploited, especially for tourist purposes. The Rumanian brochures carry enticing invitations to tourists to come and discover for themselves the answer to numerous questions related to Dracula! A wide range of "Round Trip Tourist Programmes" on various themes and various lengths are there for the tourist to choose from. Amongst these, no doubt, the more popular trips are those which come under the heading "Romania in legends and fantastic tales". These trips take you to places supposedly trodden by the heroes of not only Bram Stoker's novels, but even those of Jules Verne, the famous French writer.

For instance, a trip titled "Dracula-Truth and Legends" begins in Bucharest with a visit to the History Museum of the Socialist Republic of Rumania, where one is given a brief lecture on the personality of Vlad Tepes. The tourist is then taken out to places like Tirgoviste, Curtea de Arges, Sibin, Sighisoara, Bistrita, Poiana Brasov, towns through which Vlad the Impaler had once wandered. Perhaps the most beautiful spot is the ruins of Poienari Citadel, fortified by Vlad Tepes. The ruins stand in mystic isolation, close to the gorges carved out by the Arges river. Over 1,500 steps lead up to the ruins and to an atmosphere which brings back memories of Bram Stoker's novel. Another beautiful spot is Bram Castle where Vlad Tepes had once lived. Located in the mountain resort of Poiana Brasov, the castle has now been converted into a museum. The trip ends with a visit to Snagov Monastery on the outskirts of Bucharest, which is supposed to house Vlad the Impaler's tomb.

Though one may not actually meet vampires or other fictitious characters, the tourist is assured of a thrilling trip and "the pleasure of imaginarily re-living the adventures one has read about." No doubt, it is an experience one will have no regrets about.

Sheila Saha

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He Made the Dracula Legend

(See story alongside)



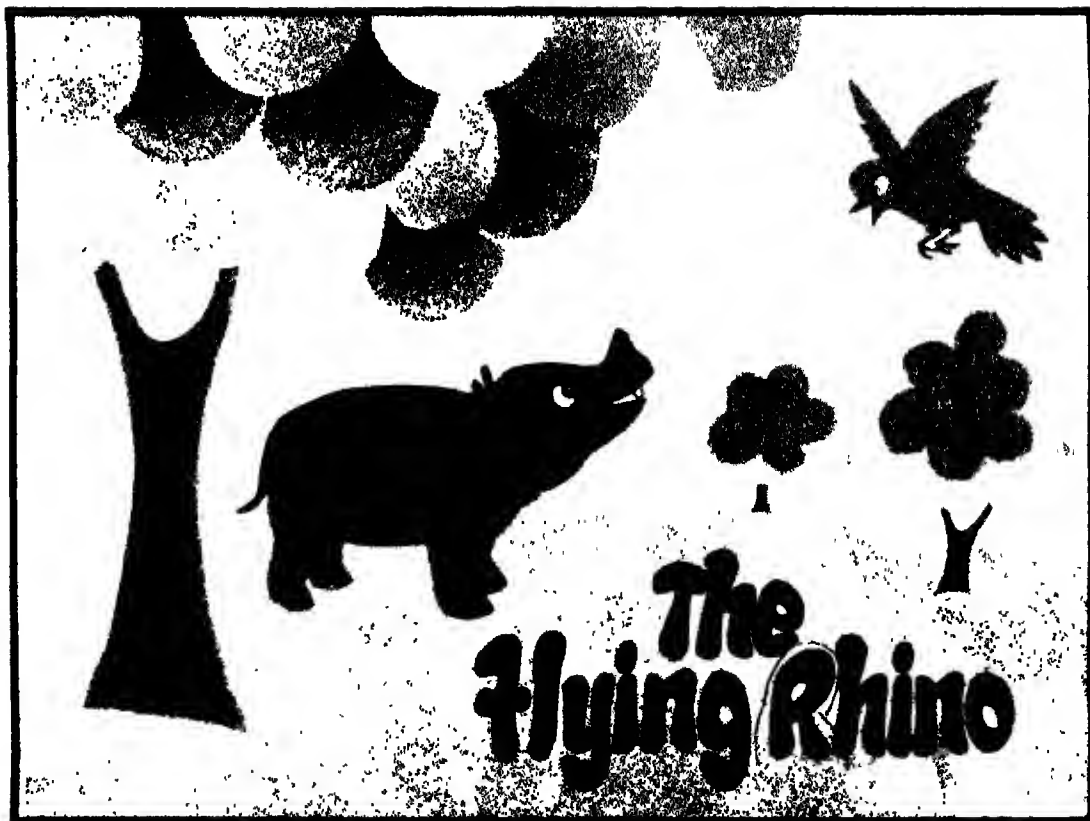
Above, left: Vlad Tepes

**Above, right: A view of the
Bram Castle**

At left: The Polenari Citadel

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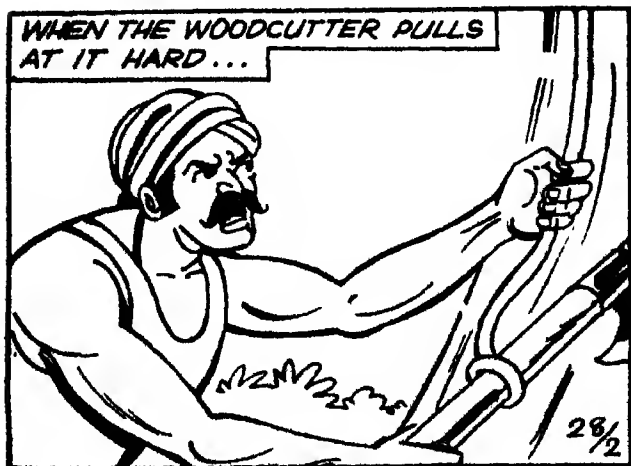
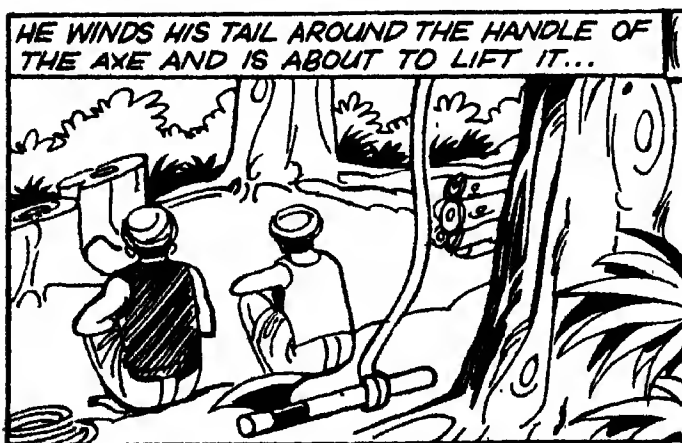
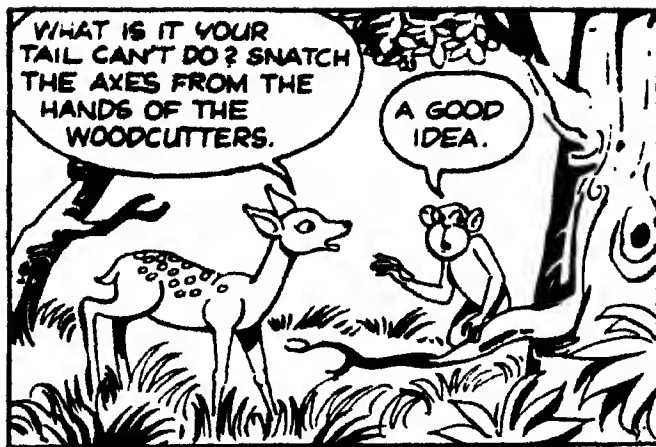
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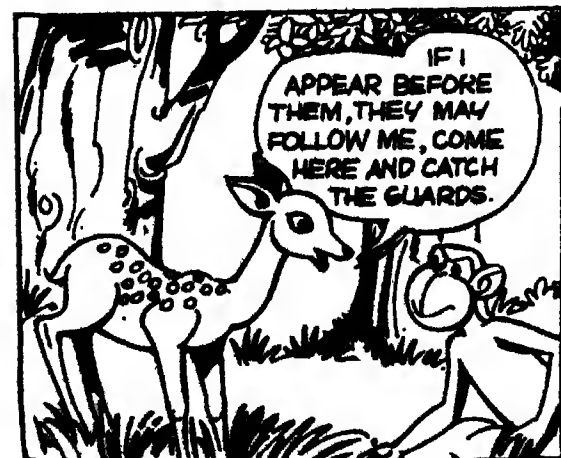
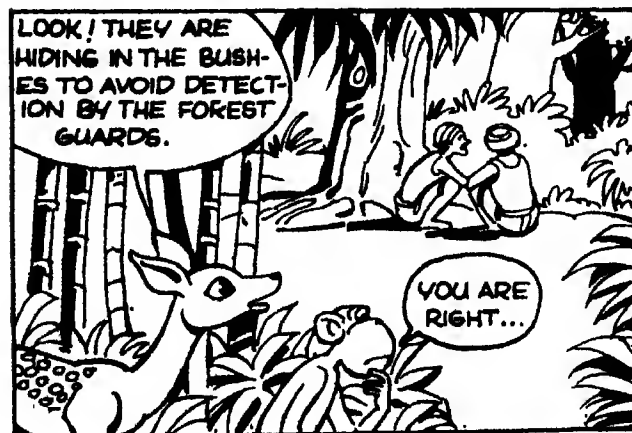
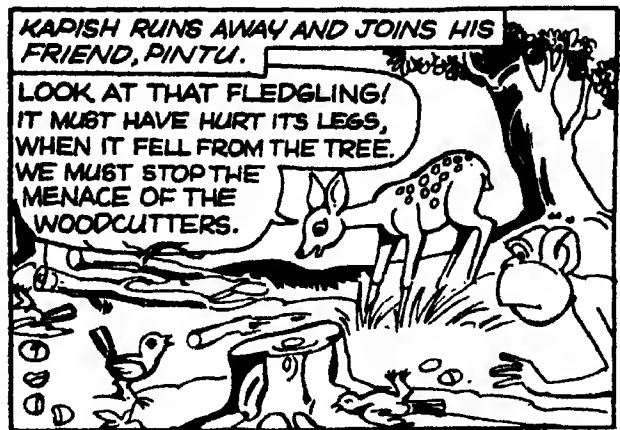
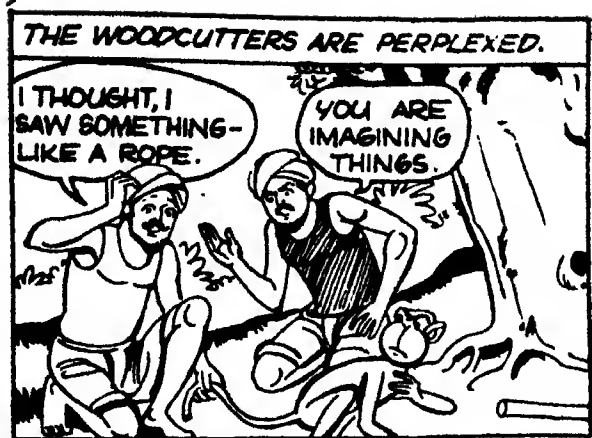


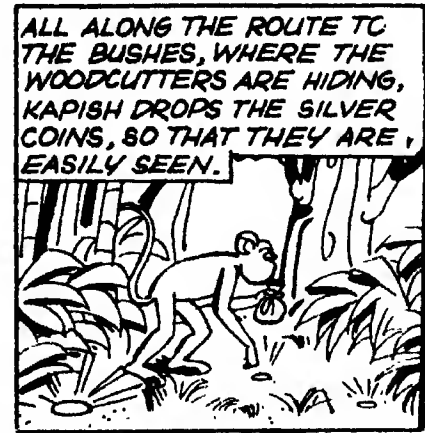
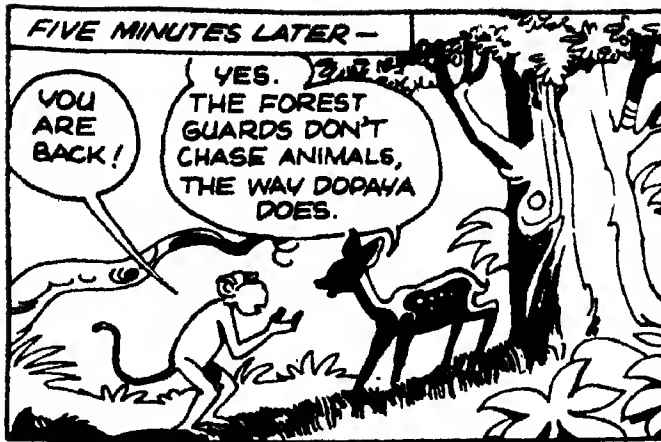
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CHILDREN'S BOOK TRUST

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one day, when spring was just round the corner, the little brown cocoon began to split...and it split a little wider, and a little wider... and under the little girl's wonderstruck eyes, two tiny wings struggled out... and then a tiny head, and finally a tiny body—and lo and behold! a beautiful blue butterfly fluttered about in new found freedom....

"Oh!...Oh!...Oh!" cried the little girl, clapping her hands with a joy that was beautiful to behold, at the sight of this tiny, perfect creation.

The caterpillar—turned butterfly—was feeling something of the same ecstasy just then. He felt great...magnificent...light and free...beautiful!

"What a lovely feeling!" he thought. Then he saw his poor sick little friend sitting on the bed and watching him with wonder-struck big brown eyes. He flitted across to her in his blue and black glory and gently flitted across the pale softness of her cheek. "Poor little one!" he murmured. "We'll cure you yet, Mother Nature and I."

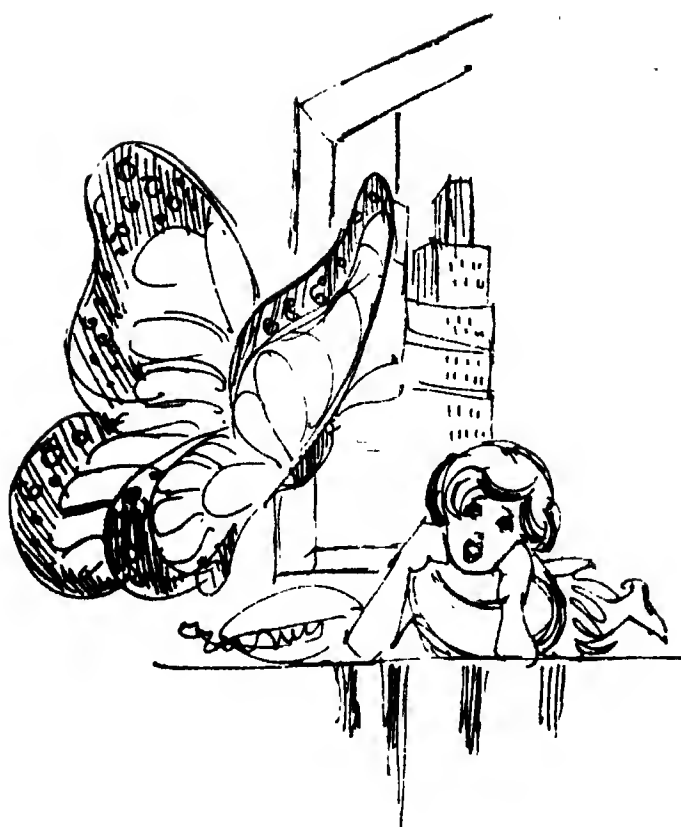
The little girl, strangely, understood what her butterfly was saying. "Oh!" she said. "Oh, my beautiful butterfly, how do I hear you speak?"

Butterfly smiled. "You are innocent," he said. "Little babies understand our strange language—because they're innocent. When they grow up, they lose this innocence—but you, my friend, haven't lost it. Your soul is as white as it was the day you were born—and so you hear me speak."

The little girl didn't really understand this theory and she asked, "Oh, my butterfly—can you really cure me?"

"Yes," answered butterfly dreamily. "Tonight! Tonight—for tomorrow I leave this world—tonight we will fly there, little one, to that fresh place under the sun where I come from...and you will lie in the grass with the flowers...and Mother Nature will take you by the hand and you will be cured—forever."

But the little girl barely heard all that her



friend had to say, because after his first sentence she sat still, all the brightness leaving her face and big brown eyes.

"Butterfly," she whispered, her big brown eyes welling up with tears, "my beautiful butterfly...are you leaving this earth? Why? oh why, my butterfly?"

Her butterfly flitted closer to her.

"My time is done," he replied gently. "Today I am your butterfly, but tonight...late tonight, just before sunrise tomorrow, I must be gone."

The little girl started to cry slowly, softly.

"Wait, little one," said butterfly. "Wait for tonight. We'll have fun as nobody ever had fun before! And when I go, you must kiss me good-bye...but never feel sad...we will meet again."

So, late that night, when the world was asleep, long after the little girl had kissed her Mum and Dad good night, they left—the beautiful butterfly and the little girl.



the caterpillar handed him over to the little girl's dad, and he took him home.

"Look, Hon," he told his little girl, who was sitting up in bed. "This is a caterpillar. Next spring he'll turn into a butterfly."

The little girl looked at the caterpillar, and she was enchanted. She had never seen a butterfly, and to her the little wriggly thing was a thing of green beauty, a joy forever.

"Oh!" she breathed. "So lovely!" she touched him softly and looked up at her Dad. "Can I hold him?" she asked.

Her dad smiled an 'of course' and handed the caterpillar over. The little girl put him on her arm, and our caterpillar, who somehow liked the feel of this pale scrap of humanity, wriggled his way up. The little girl didn't—or couldn't—move, but all her joy and excitement was written on her face—and her Mum and Dad wished for the zillionth time that they could do something—anything—to keep that smile on that pale face with the big brown eyes.

That's how they met, the little girl with the big brown eyes and the little caterpillar from the meadow. It was late summer then, and together they watched the summer slumber away into autumn—together

they watched fall sunsets, and felt the slowly seeping-in chill....the little girl took good care of the caterpillar, feeding him on left-over leaves from the perfume factory and playing tag with him using her fingers for legs, and the caterpillar took good care of the little girl, making her smile by clowning around and pretending to sleep when he knew her system needed rest—he loved her, you see, and he was smart, even for a caterpillar (and caterpillars are smarter than you think). Sometimes he would watch her while she slept through the long night. He would think—think of the lovely meadow, and of how he would love to take his little friend there and watch the golden sunshine pinken her paleness, if only he could!

But before anything could happen, the little caterpillar—who had become pretty big by then—suddenly surprised everyone by turning into a tiny brown sack and lying absolutely still.

The little girl didn't know what was happening, and she started to cry.

"He's dead, my poor sweet caterpillar!" she sobbed. "He's dead and I'll never have a friend again!"

Her mother held her close and rocked her, half-smiling, half-crying. "Don't cry, baby, don't cry," she murmured. "He's not dead—only asleep; and he has wrapped himself up in a blanket—called a cocoon."

The little girl's big brown eyes peeped out, brimming over with tears, but a little hopefully doubtful.

"Really?" she asked. "Are you sure?"

"I'm sure," smiled her mother, and held her a little tighter, thinking for the zillionth time how beautiful her girl was, how unfair it all was.....

"When will he wake up?" asked the little girl anxiously.

"Maybe a couple of months—maybe a few weeks," replied her mother, praying that whenever it would be, it would be before the little girl slept.

And so the winter passed, the little girl watching the cocoon anxiously, and her parents watching her anxiously.....and

one day, when spring was just round the corner, the little brown cocoon began to split...and it split a little wider, and a little wider... and under the little girl's wonderstruck eyes, two tiny wings struggled out... and then a tiny head, and finally a tiny body—and lo and behold! a beautiful blue butterfly fluttered about in new found freedom....

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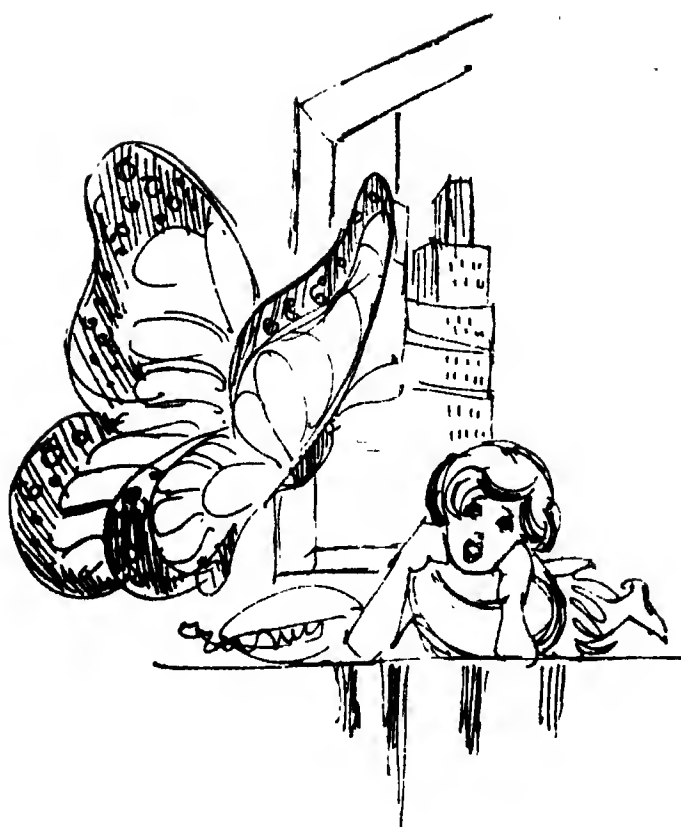
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So, late that night, when the world was asleep, long after the little girl had kissed her Mum and Dad good night, they left—the beautiful butterfly and the little girl.

with the big brown eyes. They left the city with the neon lights and the grey smoke ...and they came to that lovely meadow such as the little girl's big brown eyes had never beheld before....

"Oh, butterfly!" sighed the little girl, not believing her own eyes. "It's so beautiful!"

And they played there, the beautiful butterfly and the little girl with the big brown eyes, under the stars in the sweet

soft summer night air, filled with the music of the crickets' fiddles and the scent of the little white flowers.....

But when the night had very nearly brightened into dawn, they lay down side-by-side in the long green grass, the beautiful butterfly and the little girl with the big brown eyes. And the little girl closed her big brown eyes, and her butterfly lay quietly in the crook of her arm.

Minnie P. Swamy

The Monkey Loses

THERE was once a lazy monkey, who was always on the look out for anything free. He did not like to exert himself for his food. Everyone in the village hated him, because he was such a menace, and tried to avoid him as far as possible.

One day, a thorn got stuck at the tip of his tail. He could not easily pull it out. He found it a big strain to bend round and even attempt to pull it out. So, he trundled off to a barber and asked him to pull out the thorn for him.

The barber was in a great hurry to get rid of the monkey lest his customers went away. So, he picked up his razor and pulled out the thorn, but in the process a little bit of the monkey's tail got chopped off.

The monkey was absolutely furious. He created a scene and shouted, "Put back my tail or give me your razor!"

The barber had no other alternative than to hand over his razor. The monkey gleefully took the razor and went away.

On the way, he met an old woman who



was chopping firewood for her kitchen. The cunning monkey humbly told the old woman, "Nanny, why don't you cut the wood with this razor? It will make the task easier for you."

The old woman was pleased with the considerate monkey and the concern shown by him and gladly accepted his offer. But the razor was not strong enough for the wood, and it soon broke into two.

The horrid monkey was just waiting for a moment like that. He started yelling and shouting at the old woman. "You have broken my razor! Now, you have to give me that firewood in return, or buy me a new razor."

The poor old woman could not afford a new razor. She, therefore, gave him all the firewood.

So the monkey walked off with all the firewood. Along the way, he met a housewife busy making delicious looking pan-

cakes. He watched her for sometime. He noticed that a lot more pancakes had to be made, but she was running short of firewood. He walked up to her and said, "I could give you some firewood to finish making all your pancakes."

The housewife gratefully accepted the firewood and finished her task. But the awful monkey was just waiting for the right moment to pounce on her, which he did. "You have burnt up all my firewood," he screamed. "Now you have to give me all those pancakes as the price." And he marched off with all the pancakes!

But he did not have his day as he had figured it out. While he was hurrying to his house with all the loot, he was attacked by some dogs who got the smell of the delicious pancakes. All that the monkey could do was to abandon his pancakes, charge up a tree, and dolefully watch the dogs enjoying the pancakes to the last morsel.

(An Indian Folk Tale Retold by Alaka Shankar)

A STRANGE ENCOUNTER

VINEET entered the front door, and the same moment his heart started beating fast. He had a feeling of uneasy familiarity.

"Come on, slow-coach!" Madan pushed him from behind.

"Clo-cloach, clo-cloach," Tubby imitated, tugging at Vineet's trousers with toffeesticky fingers.

Vineet moved mechanically, his Uncle's camera swinging unheeded from his shoulders, as his hands clenched and unclenched themselves in his trouser pockets.

The room was pretty, with a bright blue carpet, comfortable looking sofa chairs, and a heavy curtain with lots of folds.

Tubby scrambled onto one of the sofas, pulling Boogle up after him and started bouncing up and down happily. Boogle, a battered red cloth elephant with a pair of bright black button eyes, was Tubby's constant companion.

"Vineet, Madan!" That was Auntie calling from the adjoining room. She was bending over an open suitcase full of clothes.

"Vineet, beta, take your case into your room upstairs. It's the one with windows all along one side. Start unpacking. I'll join you as soon as I finish with this. Madan, you and Tubby will share the room next to Vineet's. Here, take your clothes and arrange them as neatly as he does."

"Mummy, why can't I have a room to myself, like Vineet bhaiyya?" demanded Madan, his round cheeks turning pink in protest. "He's only a year and seven and three quarter months older! He's not even 13, yet. I don't want to be with Tubby. He—he snores!"

Auntie laughed and so did Vineet, forgetting for a moment the uneasiness that was filling his mind.

"Don't be silly, Madan," chided Auntie. "Wait till Tubby's a little older. Then you both can have rooms of your own. Now, quick march! Do your work and then have a look around and tell me if you like the house. It's going to be your home for the next ten days, after all!"

"Oh! oh!" shouted Madan, clutching his clothes with one hand and hitching up his trousers with the other, as he ran up the stairs.

Vineet somehow felt that he was not going to like the house. For that matter, he never had. . . . Yet this was the first time he was seeing it! That was what Auntie and Uncle and Madan and Tubby and everyone believed. He had believed it, too, but now he was just not that sure. . . .

'You know this house,' a frightening little voice spoke into his ears, 'and you hated it, but here you are back again!'

The uneasy feeling had struck Vineet while they were driving up the hill road. Madan and he had been singing loudly, leaning out of the two back windows with the cool, pine-scented air benumbing their cheeks.

"There's a big, ugly cactus, which looks like a traffic policeman round the next corner. Want to bet?" he said to Madan, all in one breath.

They had rounded the corner before Madan could reply, and sure enough there it was—a big, ugly cactus!

Auntie and Uncle were very amused. "That was a clever guess, Vineet," laughed Uncle, glancing back. "You haven't been on this road before, have you?"

Vineet shook his head. He hadn't. And yet he had known that the ugly cactus would be there. How had he known?

"Vineet bhaiyya seems to be a magician, Madan was telling Tubby. "If you don't sit quiet, he'll turn you and Boogle into micel!"

"Miaaaoowww!" said Vineet, and Tubby squealed, smothering his precious red elephant in his arms.

The car sped on and Vineet forgot all about the ugly cactus.

'That's Kasauli!' Auntie pointed to a distant hill covered with tiny, toy-like white and green and red-roofed houses. "Vineet, I wish your Mummy and Daddy could have come along with us, on this holiday. They'll be sweating it out in Delhi right now."

The car had to be parked half-a-furlong away from the house. As they all trudged along the narrow stony path, Vineet suddenly recalled, clearly too, that he had walked on this path before. He was quite sure! He had pushed the ugly cactus out of his



thought, but this knowledge clutched his mind and wouldn't go.

He shook his head to ease his tension. They rounded the corner and there was the house. It was freshly painted white, with many bright windows and a red, tiled roof. The front door was a bright cheerful red.

The house didn't look familiar at all. Vineet began to relax. It looked just like an ordinary, nice, unfamiliar house. They reached the front door. Vineet entered—and his heart started thudding....

Anupa Lal

(To be continued)

PEN-FRIENDS CORNER

GIVEN below are the names of some of the boys and girls who have been newly enrolled as members of the CHILDREN'S WORLD PEN FRIENDS CLUB. Each one of them has been given a membership number. The country in which the member desires to have pen-friends is shown within brackets. All members of our Pen-Friends Club should quote their membership number whenever they correspond with us and with each other. Members may choose their pen-friends from the list of names that will appear periodically.

2087(P)
Neeta D. Patil (girl, 13 years)
11 Chandan Park
Naranpura
Ahmedabad-13, India
Hobbies: Pen-friendship
(Russia)

2088(S)
Talha Younus Sareshwala (boy, 11 years)
6 Faize Mohammedi Society
Paldi, Ahmedabad 380007
Hobbies: Stamps, Cycling
(Switzerland)

2089 (L)
Deepak G. Lalchandani (b. 14)
A-9 Junta Quarters
Baina
Vasco-da-Gama
Goa, India
Hobbies: Stamps, Coins
(Malta, Egypt, Libya)

2090 (C)
Prajapati Kantilal Chhaganlal
(b. 16)
Fatehpura, Kumbharwada
Baroda 390006, India

Hobbies: Games, Sports
(U.S.A.)

2091 (M)
P. Ravindran Menon (b. 14)
C/o. Lt. Col. P.K.U. Menon
24 Andhra Bn. N.C.C.
Chirala 523155, India
Hobbies: Philately
(Japan, Russia)

2092 (D)
K. Lalitha Devi (g, 12)
C/o Mr. Bommidala Purnaiah
Ring Road
Guntur, India
Hobbies: Painting, Stamps
(Japan)

2093 (P)
Laxmidhar Panigrahi (b, 15)
At/P.O. Chitalpur
Via Balimi
Dt. Dhenkanal, Orissa, India
Hobbies: Stamps
(U.S.A., U.S.S.R.)

2094 (S)
Baby Sasikala (g, 9)
C/o Mr. A.N. Sachithanandan
Plot No. 4156
Anna Nagar, Madras 600040
Hobbies: Stamps, gardening
(U.S.A.)

2095
Rupa Gandhi (g, 14)
'Uday', 3rd Floor
342 Ghantali Road
Thane 400062, India
Hobbies: Reading, Travelling
(U.S.S.R.)

2096 (C)
Sumita Chickermane (g, 9)
C-77 Anand Niketan
New Delhi-110021, India
Hobbies: Gardening, Music
(Australia)

2097 (S)
Tilak Srinivasan (b, 12)
C/o Wg. Cdr. A.J. Srinivasan
Officers Mess, A.F. Station
Chakeri, Kanpur, India
Hobbies: Cycling, Sketching
(Australia)

2098 (S)
Sunayan Sanatani (b, 12)
C/o Mr. S. Sanatani
Noamundi 833217
Hobbies: Stamps, Hiking
(U.S.A.)

2099 (S)
C. Sravanthi (g, 9)
C/o Dr P. Narasimha Rao
E.N.T. Surgeon
Vidyanagar, Ring Road
Guntur 522002 India
Hobbies: Stamps, Reading
(U.S.A.)

2100 (D)
Manish Y. Desai (b, 11)
C/9 Mewawala Apartments
St. Mary's Road
Vile Parle (West)
Bombay 400056
Hobbies: Music, Hockey
(U.S.A.)

2101 (S)
Jacqueline Sequeira (g, 16)
No. 7, Parklane, 28 Union Park
Khar, Bombay 400052
Hobbies: Cooking, Music
(Sweden, U.S.S.R.)

2102 (T)
Parampal S. Thapar (b, 10)
House No. 68, Sector 11A
Chandigarh, India
Hobbies: Stamps, Coins
(U.S.A.)

(Turn over to page 48 for
more names.)

India's Debut in Test Cricket

INDIA made her debut in Test cricket on Saturday, June 25, 1932, at Lord's. Both the Indian captain, the Maharaja of Porbunder, and the vice-captain, the Maharajkumar of Limbdi, stood down from the team, which was led by C. K. Nayudu.

In keeping with tradition, the rival teams were presented to the King of England. Since that first time at Lord's several Indian teams have visited England and have been presented to the sovereign. It is, however, a strange coincidence that, until 1952, every-time an Indian team visited England a different monarch was on the throne. In 1932 it was George V, in 1936 it was Edward VIII, in 1946 it was George VI, and in 1952 it was Queen Elizabeth! The members of the Indian XI that made history were: C. K.

Nayudu, J. G. Navle (wicket-keeper), Wazir Ali, J. Naoomal, S. H. M. Colah, Nazir Ali, P. E. Palia, Lall Singh, Jehangir Khan, Amar Singh, and Mohammed Nissar.

Wisden commented upon Nayudu's captaincy in these words:

"Fortunately for the side, they (Indians) possessed in C. K. Nayudu—easily their best batsman—a man of high character and directness of purpose who, in the absence of the two above him, was able to take over the captaincy, with skill and no measure of success."

Few sportsmen are destined to become a legend in their lifetime, and even few are remembered after their playing days are over. One among such rarities is C. K. Nayudu, about whom Jack Hobbs said,



The Indian cricket team that toured England in 1932: Ground: J. Naoomal, S.H.M. Colah, and N.D. Marshall. Seated: S. Wazir Ali, C.K. Nayudu, E.W.C. Ricketts (Manager), The Maharaja of Porbunder (Captain), Prince Ghanshyam Singhji of Limbdi (Vice-Captain), S. Nazir Ali, and S. Joginder Singh. Standing: Lall Singh, P.E. Palia, W. Jehangir Khan, Mohamad Nissar, L. Amar Singh, B.E. Kapadia, S.R. Godambe, Ghulam Mohamed, and J.G. Navle.

"You have only to see him pick up a ball to know he is a born cricketer." C. B. Fry, the fabulous Ranji's Sussex batting partner, described him as "one of the greatest living cricketers." Making his Test debut at the age of 37, C. K. Nayudu played only in seven Tests—all against England. One of the greatest allrounders in the game, C. K. majestically strode the cricketing scene like a Colossus, overshadowing all others by his genius. One of the most stylish front-of-the-wicket players, his technique was a rare combination of the orthodox and the unorthodox. With his extraordinary height and steely wrists, his amazing eye and quick reflexes, his batting was a delight to watch. On the 1932 tour of England, Nayudu hit 36 sixes. Describing one of his sixes at Lord's, an English critic said: "The ball was last seen sailing in an easterly direction."

As a bowler, C. K. could hold his own in the best company. At medium slow he bowled the out-swinger, with an occasional off-spinner. When he bowled a slower ball, he varied his off-breaks. Fielding was Nayudu's special passion and glory. His many catches close to the wicket bordered on the miraculous, pouncing on the ball and picking it up inches off the turf. Nayudu led India in four Tests. His leadership was marked by a boldness one can rarely see among Test captains today. C. K. Nayudu was, without doubt, one of the greatest cricketers by any standard and in any age.

The England team, captained by Douglas Jardine, was a very strong side, perhaps the strongest ever English side to play against India. It included Herbert Sutcliffe, P. Holmes, F. E. Woolley, L. Ames (wicket-keeper), W. R. Hammond, E. Paynter, R. W. V. Robbings, F. R. Brown, W. Voce, and W. E. Bowes.

Jardine won the toss and elected to bat on a firm wicket. It was a dull and cloudy morning, but the sun came out from behind a bank of heavy cloud as C. K. Nayudu led the team out to field. Sutcliffe and Holmes walked out to the middle to open the England innings. Nissar, from the Pavilion end, and Amar Singh, from the Nursery end, were in charge of the attack. Skipper Nayudu set a field of three slips and three short-legs, which the England captain said

was the most attacking field he had ever seen set for any bowler.

Th England batsmen pushed on the total to eight by scoring in singles. Then, Nissar dealt two mortal blows in quick succession, which sent England reeling. With the first ball of his third over, he bowled Sutcliffe (3), and with the last ball of the same over, he bowled Holmes (6), with the England total at 11. Only ten days earlier, Holmes and Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire twins as they were called, had scored a world record score of 555 runs for the first wicket against Essex, which still stands in their name.



C.K. Nayudu

According to Fry, Nissar in the first few overs was "the fastest bowler in the world." Considering that Larwood was then bowling at his fastest, this was high praise indeed. Hammond joined Woolley, but there was a bigger shock in store for England. At 18, Woolley one of the most graceful batsman and a left-hander of renown, played a ball to square-leg and took an easy single. Confident that he could take a second run, Woolley dashed down the wicket, but it was too late. In a flash, Lall Singh pounced upon the ball and made a quick return to wicket-keeper Navle, who whipped off the bails to run out Woolley (9).



Mohd. Nissar

In a disastrous 20 minutes, England had lost three wickets for 19 runs! It was incredible, and the spectators could hardly believe their eyes—as they saw Woolley walking back to the Pavilion. In the words of Neville Cardus, "It was a nice state of things. In my mind's eye I saw the news flashing over the air to far-flung places in India—Punjab and Karachi—and Kuala Lumpur, to dusky men in the hills, to the bazaars in the east, to Gandhi himself and Gunga Din." The babes of Test cricket had given a big jolt to the mighty Englishmen and, in this moment of crisis, Douglas Jardine joined Hammond. The fourth wicket partnership realised 82 runs before Hammond (35) was bowled with a yorker by Amar Singh, and England were 101 for four.

C. K. Nayudu then dismissed Paynter (14) who was declared lbw, and half the England side were out for 149. When Jardine (79) left caught by Navle at the wicket off Nayudu, England were 166 for six. Ames (65) played a valuable innings to add 63 runs for the seventh wicket with Robbins before he was bowled by Nissar. England were all-out for 259, which was a poor total, considering the fact that it was India's first Test. For India, Mohammed Nissar had the best bowling figures (five for 93) followed by C. K. Nayudu (two for 40), and Amar Singh (two for 75).

Navle and Naoomal opened India's innings and the pair were together with 30 runs on the board when play ended for the day. After a day's rest on Sunday, India continued the battle on Monday. Navle (12) left with the addition of only 9 runs to the overnight total, and Naoomal (33) was bowled by Robbins at 63. The stubborn third wicket partnership between Wazir Ali (31) and Nayudu (40) took the total to 110, when Wazir Ali was out lbw to Brown. Nayudu's brave and defiant innings lasting 105 minutes ended, when he cocked up an easy catch to Robbins off Voce, and India were four for 139. After Nayudu left, the Indian innings folded up for 189, despite the stubborn innings of Colah (22), Nazir Ali (13), and Lall Singh (15).

With a lead of 70 runs, England fared no better in the second innings—four wickets falling for 63 runs. Sutcliffe was caught by

Nayudu off Amar Singh for 19, while Jehangir Khan dismissed the next three batsmen for the addition of only 24 runs. The Cambridge University fast bowler's victims were Holmes bowled for 11, Hammond bowled for 12, and Woolley caught by Colah for 21. Once again, Jardine came to the rescue of his team and pulled England out of trouble. Jardine was unbeaten with 85, when he declared the innings closed at 275 for eight. Pavnter (54), Robbins (30), and Brown (29) helped their captain to keep India at bay..

India began the second innings needing 346 runs to win, but with three men—Wazir Ali, Palia and Nayudu—on the injured list—the going was difficult. To make matters worse, the wicket was showing signs of wear, and the main question was to save the match. Navle (13) and Naomal (25), however, gave a good start to the innings, putting on 41 runs, before Navle was out lbw to Robins. Naomal was bowled by Brown without any addition to the total. Wazir Ali (39) fell to a miraculous catch in the slips by Hammond, off Voce, and Nayudu (10) was bowled by the same bowler. India were four down for 65. The situation was no worse than what England had to face, but India had no Jardine to hold the side together. The fight seemed over, bar the shouting, but before the match ended there was a bright spark lit by Lall Singh and Amar Singh. In the last ditch stand for the eighth wicket, the pair put on 74 runs in 40 minutes. Amar Singh cut the England bowling to ribbons, hitting Brown three times in succession to the boundary and the fourth ball over the fence for a six—18 runs in an over. Before Hammond caught him off his own bowling to dismiss Amar Singh, the gallant Indian had put on 51 priceless runs. It was a brave way of dying! Lall Singh, who was bowled by Hammond, made 29. The last Indian wicket fell at 187, leaving England victors by 158 runs.

The Indian cricketers created a very good impression. Nayudu, Wazir Ali, Nazir Ali, and Naomal were singled out as batsmen of real class. Nissar recieved high praise for his bowling, and critics described him as one of the fastest in the game. Wisden, writing about the Indian players, described

Amar Singh as "the most dangerous all-rounder on the tour." The Indian bowlers served the country well, but it was the batsmen who let the side down. Nissar had match figures of 6 for 132, Amar Singh 4 for 159, Nayudu 2 for 61, and Jehangir Khan 4 for 85. Wazir Ali headed the batting with an aggregate of 70 (average 35), Naomal 56 (average 28), and Nayudu 50 (average 25).

The Lord's Test demonstrated the fatal flaw of Indian Sport, particularly in international competitions. This can be summed up in one sentence: Individual brilliance and collective mediocrity.

Saradindu Sanyal

Despair and Delight

The results have come.
My number
Of course, it should be there—
Positively in the last column
Among the exemptions.
My eye quickly glances.
Alas! No, it is not there
Then where?
I was sure.
In Botany I am poor.
But Zoology—I can dissect.
Well, then where
My lucky number fair?
I further inspect.
Second Class.
My number is no member
Of this class either.
Now I weep,
My eyes go dry.
Then the thought,
My presumption,
Perchance it is false.
Better look in the ranks
Alas! There, too, I draw a blank.
I suspect—
Check in the First Grade
And Hooray! There it is!
That will save my face
With the progenitors of my case.

T. S. Chandra

VICTOR TRUMPER

--The Prince Among Batsmen--

NEARLY a century has elapsed since the birth of Victor Thomas Trumper, but even to this distant date the memory of his incomparable batsmanship remains unimpaired. Rarely, if ever, has a cricketer attained to the popularity that Trumper achieved in his hey-day. The luxuriant masterfulness of his play, its ornamental charm and elegance, enslaved thousands throughout England and Australia, and carried the fame of its moonbeam beauty across the seas to other continents. Trumper's batting was poetry in action: it came to him as spontaneously as flying to birds and swimming to fish. Every innings from his blade was a veritable gem, a blend of beauteous, audacious strokes which sent the ball skimming to all points of the compass. Trumper, it is said, never essayed a single crude or awkward stroke in his life, and this may well be true.

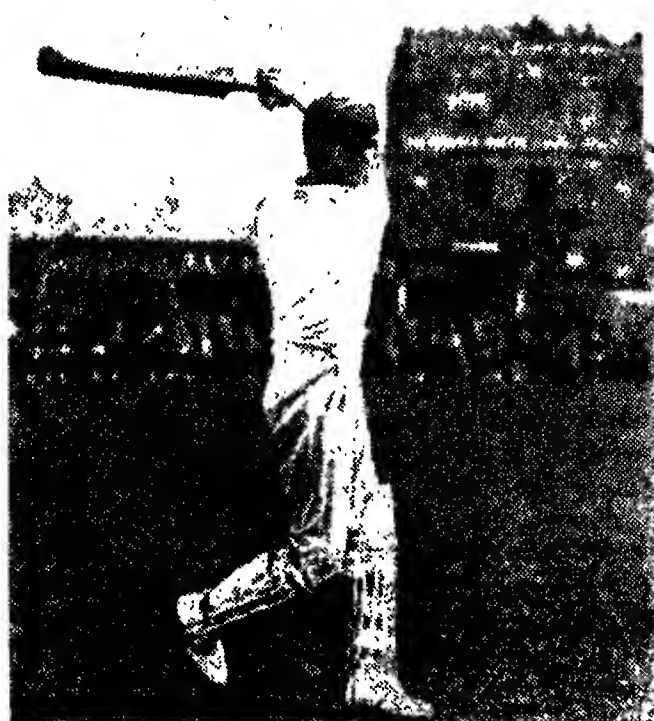
Victor Trumper first saw the light of day

on the 2nd of November 1877, and without being coached at any stage of his formative years, picked up the rudiments of the game through his own natural God-given gifts. In 1897 he ran up an amazing sequence of scores for the Paddington Club that has no parallel in Australian cricket: 82, 123, 125, 85, 120, 191, 133, 162—a grand total of 1021 runs with three not outs at an average of 204.20—not at all bad for a lad of twenty!

When the English team visited Australia in 1897-98, Trumper could get only 5, 0, 4 and 23 in two matches against them, but Ranjitsinghji quickly noted his class and wrote: "The confidence with which he played the bowling, although it was for a very short time, makes me firmly believe that he will be a very great batsman. . . . I have seen very few beginners play the ball so well and show the same excellent style." In a few years Trumper was to take over from Ranji the crown of the best batsman in the world.

In 1899, Trumper was selected to tour England on half-share basis and partly to assist the manager, but before the end of the series he was allowed the full share in recognition of his contribution to the team's batting. After an inauspicious start at Nottingham (0 and 11) he hit a princely 135* out of 232 in 195 minutes at Lord's in the very next Test. "Nothing", commented WISDEN, "could have been better".

When Trumper next left England's shores in 1902 he was without any reservation hailed as the leading batsman in the world. Of the 13 hundreds scored by all the Australians combined, Trumper accounted for 11 in his total of 2570 runs at 48.49—figures that show just how completely he dominated the play. At Sheffield, on a horrible pitch, he hit 62 out of 80 in 50 minutes in the third Test, but an even greater triumph awaited him at Old Trafford. On a slow pitch with a sluggish outfield and against bowlers of the



calibre of Lockwood, Rhodes, Jackson, Len Braund and Fred Tate, he hit a century before lunch, Australia at that stage being 173-1! As Australia won the contest by three runs, Trumper's great part will be readily appreciated.

But Trumper's masterpiece was yet to come. In the first Test at Sydney in 1903-04, Australia made 285 to which England replied with 460, a lead of 292 runs. Coming in at 191 for 3 Trumper hit the bowling to all parts of the ground in his best style and tore the English attack apart with a century in 91 minutes, remaining unconquered at the end with 185 in 230 minutes with 25 boundaries. And he never made a single mistake throughout! This was followed by 74 and 35 (top score in both innings) at Melbourne, 113 and 59 at Adelaide and a fine 88 in the last Test, finishing the series with the then record aggregate of 574 runs at 63.77.

After this spate of success, however, Trumper's batsmanship declined in terms of quantity, if not quality. He just could not get going in the Test games and though there were frequent purple patches, he could not keep up his consistency. The visit of the South Africans in 1910-11 provided Trumper with a new challenge in the shape of googly bowling, and the way he mastered this novel attack is now history. He had a Test sequence of 27, 159, 214*, 28, 7, 87, 31 and 71*, totalling 661 at 94.42. Trumper played his last series against the 'Old Enemy' in 1911-12, starting off with 113 in the first Test and finishing with a 'perfect peach' of a fifty in the fifth and last. In 48 Test Matches against some of the finest English and South African bowling on untrustworthy pitches he hit 3,164 runs at 39.06 with 8 hundreds, a Test record at the time. In all first-class matches he made 16,939 runs at 44.57 with 42 centuries. Statistics, however, prove little or nothing of his blythe approach to batting. He left the grafting of runs to other and lesser batsmen; he always pursued style for style's sake.

Aggression was the keynote of Trumper's batting, but his hitting was not done crudely or injudiciously. Even when scoring at his fastest, every ball was hit with the middle

of the bat, struck cleanly and timed to perfection. All throughout his career he kept up a scoring rate of over 55 runs an hour off his own bat. He once despatched the opening ball from a New Zealand fast bowler for a six and reached one of his fifties in a club match in just 5½ minutes off 10 balls, five sixes and five fours! He was the master of every stroke and it was said of him that he had as many as six different strokes for every ball. This enabled him to hit length balls with freedom and impunity. Against Redfern in a Club match in Australia he made 335 in just 160 minutes with 39 fours and 22 hits out of the ground which fetched him five runs each time.

His footwork was so rapid and sure that he regularly went out yards to meet the ball and was seldom stumped: indeed, in all his 75 innings against England he was never once dismissed thus. His steel-like wrists of great power gave his strokes plenty of vigour and such was his timing that he had only to touch the ball at a given point for it to fly to the boundary. Yes, had he a mind to it, Trumper would have been the most prolific of batsmen.

When Victor died prematurely on June 28, 1915 at the age of 37, the Sydneysiders forgot the grim realities of war and lined the pavements in their thousands to pay tribute to a great artist. Never will the world see his like again. He was the flower of Australian batsmanship.

Mahiyar D. Morawalla

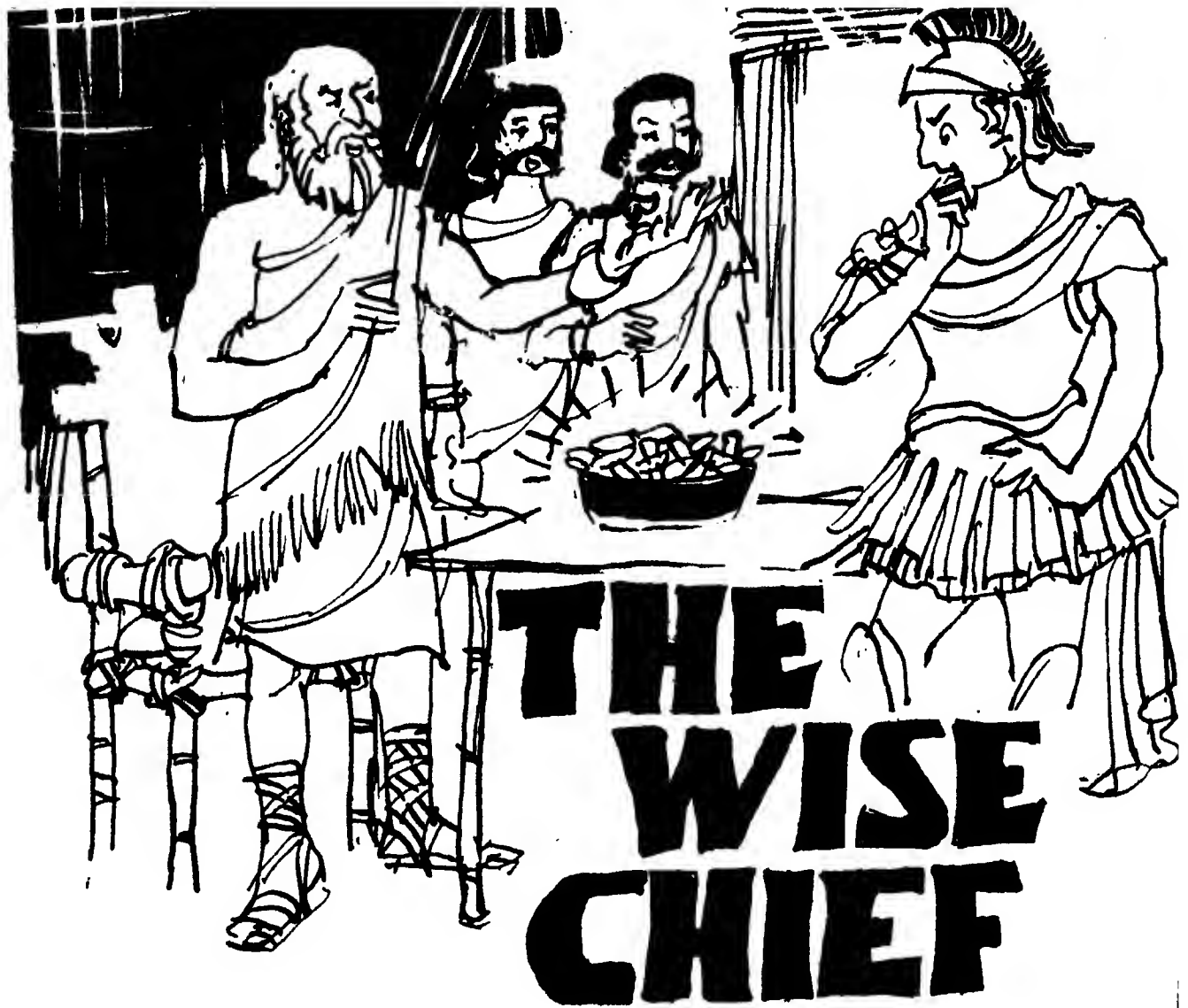
FRIENDSHIP

A light is seen in the darkness,
a light that cannot fade,
in sunshine or in shade
a light that shines brightly
for many many years;

A friendly light
that takes away your fears
once you see this light of friendship,
you will see the perfumed roses
dropping petals of happiness around
your door.

This light will shine more and more
giving you the friendly warm feeling
which you will adore.

Alpana Ansal (12) India



THIS IS one of the lesser known stories about Alexander the Great.

Alexander was engaged in his conquering march through the East, when he came upon a tribe living in a lonely place, far away from the haunts of men. This tribe led a very simple life, and knew neither war nor conquest. The members of the tribe lived only for peace.

Alexander, the story goes, was led to the hut of the chief of the tribe, who received him with kindness and hospitality. He ordered a plate of fruits, to be brought for Alexander. When the dish was brought, the Greek hero was greatly astonished to find that it contained, not something fit to eat, but several dates all made of solid gold.

"Golden dates!" exclaimed Alexander. "Do you eat gold in this country?"

"Oh, no!" replied the chief. "But as fruits

must certainly be growing in your country as it does here, I thought it must be gold that you are in search of."

"It is not your gold which has tempted me here," the conqueror hurriedly assured him. "I want to know something of your manners and customs."

"Stay with me, then," replied the chief, "and you will learn all that you wish to know."

After a little while, two tribesmen came into the chief's hut.

"From this man, I bought a piece of land," said one of them, "and as I was digging a ditch to drain it, I came upon a treasure of gold that lay buried beneath the surface. I took the treasure back to this man who once owned the land; but he refuses to take it, although, of course, it cannot belong to me."

"I hope I have a conscience as well as this man," answered the other. "I sold him the land with all its future as well as its present advantages and, naturally, the treasure must belong to him."

The chief thought deeply for a moment. Then he said to the complainant: "You have an only son, I believe?"

The man replied that it was so.

"And you have a daughter?" continued the chief, turning to the other man.

"It is so," was the reply.

"In that case," said the chief, "let the boy marry the girl, and you can bestow the treasure upon them as a marriage gift."

On hearing this, Alexander was very surprised.

"Why, do you think my decision is unjust?" asked the chief.

"Oh, no!" replied the Greek conqueror. "But I am greatly astonished because I have never heard of anything like this before."

"How would they have decided this problem in your country?" the chief asked, curiously.

"To tell you the truth," replied Alexander, very much ashamed, "we would have arrested both the men and seized the treasure for the king's use!"

"For the king's use!" exclaimed the chief, in his turn greatly astonished. "Does the sun of the heavens shine in your country?"

"Oh, yes!" said Alexander. "It shines just as it does here."

"And does the gentle rain also fall in your country?" asked the chief again.

"Certainly!"

"How wonderful!" cried the chief. Then he sat for a while silent, but thinking deeply, as the conqueror wondered why he had asked the questions about the sun and the rain. At last the chief spoke once again.

"Are there in your country tame animals that live on grass?" he asked.

"Many of them," replied Alexander.

"Ah," said the chief, "then, it must be for the animals that God allows the sun to shine and the rain to fall in a country where men are so base and so unworthy of such great blessings."

Lakshmi Hejamadi

AN OLD OLD TALE

THE children's film on the TV reminded me. The wicked dragon on its claw-like feet ran to devour the little princess chained to a rock, as she wept her bitter tears. At the fifty-ninth minute of the eleventh hour, the handsome warrior turned up. One blow of his flashing steel was enough for the dragon. The warrior and the princess were married and lived happily ever after.

I smiled. It might have happened yesterday.

I had been engrossed in one of Enid Blyton's newest publications. It was such an exciting story, too, very like the children's film I saw just now in its import, and how it appealed to my childish imagination, as I pictured myself in the place of the maligned princess. Little did I know that my dreams were to come true, and so soon at that. For, as I looked up at the end of the story, to sigh contentedly, I saw IT.

IT had the same shape as the dragon in the story. The same black wicked eyes, the same horrible claw-like feet. IT's movements had the same uncanny swiftness. And IT was joined soon after by another of the same shape, but bigger, broader, sturdier.

The ITs held a quick conference among themselves, as I watched, fascinated and hypnotized. One of them yawned to show me the chasm that was ITs mouth, and waved ITs tongue in the air.

Oh, IT was coming...towards me! I crept down quickly from my couch trying to move quietly away. But ITs eyes winked at ITs neighbour, and IT changed ITs direction. I screamed.

In ran Chameli, the maid.

"What's the matter, Didi? Why did you scream?" she enquired alarmed.

"That...that IT," I pointed to the rapidly advancing menace.

"Oh, Didi, is that all you're afraid of? A little lizard? I'll fix him." She ran after IT with a stick. One blow of the stick was enough for "the dragon". However, Chameli and I did not get married, but we still live happily and hope to do so "ever after".

Bani Mitra

FAMOUS ARTISTS—3



WITH a clatter of hooves and a crunch of iron-shod wheels, a carriage arrives in front of a house in the village of Chiswick and out steps a burly little man in a wig and a three-cornered hat. William Hogarth, the artist and engraver, is home from his London studios.

His dogs run to meet him, barking a greeting, and he pats them as he hurries across the big lawn to greet his wife Jane, his sister Ann, and his widowed mother-in-law Dame Judith Thornhill, where they sit sewing and gossiping together under a tree.

Hogarth (1697-1764) loved this 'little coun-

try box by the Thames', as he called the house, to which he brought his wife, the daughter of Sir James Thornhill, the celebrated painter, in 1749, and where, in a studio in the garden, he executed some of his famous pictures.

Born in London, the son of a poor school-master, Hogarth on his own admission 'cut a poor figure' at school. 'Blockheads with better memories could surpass me,' he wrote. But how he could draw! Sketches in his school books, incidentally, earned him many cuffs from masters.



OUT of school, he searched for subjects to draw, observing people and places closely. And—so much for his 'bad memory,' he memorised all he saw and without even so much as a pencilled note, set it down on paper, lifelike and vivid, when he got home.

Added to his genius as an artist was a keen ambition to get on. He was apprenticed to an engraver and by the time he was 21 years old, he was in business on his own account, proudly putting up his name plate—W. HOGARTH, ENGRAVER—over a shop in a London square.

He designed and printed coats of arms, bookplates, and bills. At the same time, he began to execute satirical pictures reflecting the life of his time, which were to stamp him as a chronicler of social history, of the customs and follies of 18th century London.

Seeking to compose in pictures human dramas such as he saw on the stage, he launched his famous series of 'morals' paintings, for instance 'Marriage a la Mode' dealing with the tragedy of marriage contracted for money. The engraved prints sold widely.

WILLIAM HOGARTH



HE had been inspired to start painting, as distinct from drawing, when he saw religious frescoes painted by Sir James Thornhill inside the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. And it was at Thornhill's studios that Hogarth met the painter's daughter Jane, his wife-to-be.

He became one of the best portrait painters in the history of British art, a reputation owed to sheer genius. For Hogarth never flattered a sitter. But his phenomenal success as a satirical and comic artist eclipsed his reputation as a portraitist.

Hogarth had a great sense of fun. He loved

to romp on the lawn with his pug dog Trump, and to play ninepins in his skittle alley. He liked the company of children and used to invite the boys and girls of Chiswick village to help themselves to fruits from his mulberry tree.

In London, he was fond of meeting with friends in the Bedford Arms Tavern, in Covent Garden, where many convivial evenings were spent over steaming bowls of punch and pipes of fragrant tobacco. This mere 5-ft-tall artist presided there over the Hogarth Club.



THIS quarter of London was in those days the haunt of artists. Among the members of the Club were John Thornhill, Hogarth's brother-in-law, himself a distinguished painter, and Sam Scott, a marine artist of high reputation. Sometimes, they sat and sketched each other!

And it was from this tavern that at midnight, one spring day in 1732, Hogarth and four cronies set out for a jolly walking tour of Kent, singing lustily as they tramped the dark streets. They recorded the walk in a funny book, *'Hogarth's Frolic'*.

They tramped for five days, enjoying themselves like truant schoolboys. They played hops-cotch in the colonnade of the Guildhall, in the City of Rochester, fought battles with sticks, stones, and turves in the fields. Hogarth loved every minute of the hilarious excursion.

Hogarth's 'little country box by the Thames' at Chiswick, still stands today, preserved as a museum in his memory. Pictures and engravings by him hang on the walls. In the garden, his mulberry tree, patched up after wartime bomb damage, still bears delicious fruits.

(Courtesy: BIS)

CONGRATULATIONS!

A PAINTING entered by a 15-year-old Japanese girl, MIE NAGASAWA, has been selected for the top award in the Shankar's International Children's Competition 1976. She receives the President of India's Gold Medal for her painting "My Friend". This much-coveted award had earlier gone to Japan in the Competitions held in 1953, 1954, and 1963.

The first prize for written work goes to a Canadian boy with Indian origin, NARAYANA SUBRAHMANYAM (13 years). He wins the Vice-President of India's Gold Medal for his historical play "The Marriage of Mary Tudor". This is the third time that a Canadian child is winning this literary award, since 1954 and 1962.

The next best awards—the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Gold Medal—have been won by 22 children in 16 countries. They are:

PAINTING: Argentina: Hector Mario Carrozzi (10 years), Austria: Karin Schleiss (8), Bangladesh: Md. Rafique Azam (13), Czechoslovakia: Michalek Ladislav (8) and Lea Sedlakova (13), G.D.R.: Uta Siefert (12), Barbel Richter (15) and Elke Didschuneit (15), Hungary: Judit Orcsik (11), India: Shipra Saha (15), Japan: Noriko Suzuki (12), Malaysia: Lohman Kamaruddin (11) and Lim Fang Woei (14), Poland: Janusz Sycz (9) and Barbara Bogiel (14), the USSR: Lena Alysheva (7) and Igor Kostionov (10), and Yugoslavia: Zaklina Ilievska (12).

WRITING: Australia: Robert Roy (11), and Ireland: Mary Rose Walker (12).

In all, 744 children from 74 countries have won prizes in the 1976 Competition. Of these, 662 go for painting and the remaining 82 for literary entries. The awards include the 24 gold medals mentioned above, 452 prizes, and 292 Silver Medals.

The largest number of prizes (110) have been won by children in India. These include one 'Nehru Award'. Japan with 50 prizes, including one Nehru Award, keeps

up its top position among other countries. Its consistent record has only one break—in 1974, when Poland topped countries other than India. Poland, this year, comes next, winning 2 Nehru Awards and 35 other prizes. Malaysia takes the next place with a tally of 29, including 2 Nehru Awards, followed by Argentina (27—one Nehru Award), the German Democratic Republic (25-3 Nehru Awards), the USSR (22-2 Nehru Awards), Hungary (22—one Nehru Award), and Britain (20—one Nehru Award).

SOME HIGHLIGHTS

Carlos Enrique Labarthe of Argentina wins a prize for the 11th time. His 'bag' contains 9 prizes and 2 Silver Medals. The other Argentinian children who had won prizes in earlier years, too, are Maria Gabriela Aragno (for 6 years), Hector Mario Carrozzi (5 years, with a Nehru Award in 1976), Patricia Marta Borgoglio Urcola (5 years), Debora Jidith Weisvein (4 years), and Marcelo Antonic Mango (4 years).

Elke Didschuneit of the G.D.R. has a unique record. She has won prizes since 1969, including the President of India's Gold Medal in 1975, four Nehru Awards in 1969, 1971, 1973, and 1976, and other prizes in 1970, 1972, and 1974. Catrin Zipfel has won a prize for the 8th time, while Gudrun Bartels gets a prize for the 4th time.

Among Polish children, Barbara Posrednik wins a prize for the 9th successive year. Barbara Bogiel adds a Nehru Award in 1976 to her prizes won in 1970, 71, 73, 74, and 1975. Zofia Prus wins a prize for the 6th consecutive year. His tally is 7 prizes, as his written work and painting both drew merit in 1974. Dorota Wielgus has won a prize for the 5th time.

In the Republic of Korea, Im Yuen-Wook is a prizewinner for the 4th successive year.

Mari Itoh of Japan has won a prize for the third time.

Nearer home, Shubho Supriyo Malaker of Bangladesh wins a prize for the 5th consecutive year. He had won a Nehru Award in 1973. His compatriot, Khandoker Abu Sayeed, is a prizewinner for the 5th time.

In India, the Reddy sisters of Hyderabad, Sudha and Padma, have been winning prizes ever since 1968. Sanjay Srinivas R. Rao of Bangalore is a prizewinner for the 5th consecutive year.

The Shankar's International Children's

Competition 1976 was the 28th successive contest since 1949, when it was first organised by the SHANKAR'S WEEKLY. From 1975, it is being sponsored by the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund. The 1976 Competition attracted over 150,000 entries from more than 100 countries.

The Competition is open to children upto 16 years of age. The closing date is December 31 every year. Detailed Rules of the 1977 Competition appear elsewhere.

Oh, What a Day !

"NOW, what do we do today?" asked Leela with a bored look on her face. "Rajan, have you any idea for doing something exciting?" Ashok asked their 'leader,' who was never at a loss for cooking up some fun.

"And get me into trouble again, eh?" Rajan scowled, thinking of the scolding he had received the previous day for deciding to bake a cake while his mother was out. And was it a cake!

"Nalini, let's clean our cupboards today," Leela said. "First I'll help you settle your cupboard and room, then you come over to my house and help me."

"Help me..." mimicked her brother, Ashok. "And what do we boys do? Watch you nice little girls getting all the praise from mummy?"

"Nothing doing," Rajan decided for them. "We all had planned to spend our holidays together and that's what we will do. Now everyone think of some plans for today, seriously."

Nalini kept drawing flowers on a sheet of paper, much to Rajan's annoyance. Ashok picked up a book and turned the pages listlessly. Leela pretended to think, but looked quite blank. Very soon they would start fighting and land themselves in more trouble.

"Rrrring..." went the doorbell, breaking the dull monotony that prevailed in the room. All four looked expectantly at the door as Nalini went to open it.

"Oh, yippeel" she shouted. "It's Uncle Mathan." And she surged forward to give the grinning man a big bear hug.

"What a pleasant surprise," Rajan said as he went forward and shook hands with him.

"Well, young lad, I hear you are doing fine in school. How are you progressing in cricket?" Uncle Mathan asked him as he seated himself in a comfortable sofa.

"I am the vice-captain of my school team, sir," Rajan replied proudly. Uncle Mathan was his idol and Rajan flushed with happiness on seeing him.

"And these your friends?" Uncle Mathan asked about Leela and Ashok.

"Yes, Leela is Nalini's classmate and Ashok is with me. They are also our neighbours," Rajan replied. "This is our Uncle Mathan, whom we are always talking about," he told Nalini and Ashok.

"Talking ill of me?" Uncle Mathan asked.

"Oh, Uncle, you know you are our most favourite uncle," Nalini chided him.

"So what have the mice been doing while the cats are away?" Uncle Mathan asked.

"We were just wondering what we should do," Nalini rattled away. "Leela's parents also go to work and we take turns in spending the day at each other's house. Leela was telling me we could clean our cupboards but..."

"Stop talking, silly," Rajan stopped her as Uncle Mathan watched with an amused look. "Uncle, what shall we get you? Can

"I make some tea, or would you like something cold?" Rajan asked, acting the perfect host.

"Good, good, you impress me!" Uncle Mathan said. "But I have a better idea. Let us all go out sparing for the day!"

Leela giggled on hearing him use the word 'sparing'! He really was 'hep', she thought. Everyone got excited at the idea of sparing with Uncle Mathan, for it was surely going to be great fun. It was planned out how a note would be left in both the houses, that the children were in the 'safe custody' of Uncle Mathan and would return home a bit late in the evening. Once the commotion was over, Uncle Mathan lit a cigar and waited for the children to get ready.

"And you'd better decide fast what you are going to wear," Rajan shouted as the two of them scrambled off to Leela's house.

"You boys also can stop acting smart, fast," retorted Leela, as she mentally thought what she would wear.

Rajan decided that his jeans and T-shirt were fine, and so he just got into his shoes. He picked up a pen and a pad and wrote out the two notes for the respective parents. Everything about him was systematic. That was why he didn't often get into any soup. That was one more reason for him to be the chosen leader.

Ashok went across to his house to leave the note for his parents and 'chase' the girls out fast.

Rajan carried on a conversation with Uncle Mathan, who told him that he was in the capital on an official visit and that his work for the day was completed in surprisingly short time and, so, he was at the service of the children!

"How do you plan to spend the day, Uncle Mathan?" Rajan asked cautiously.

"Well, I leave it all to you. Let us see how you will organise the day's schedule," Uncle Mathan challenged him.

"We all will plan together," shouted Nalini, as she overheard the tail end of the conversation.

And so there was heated discussion on what they all should do.

"Let's see a movie," piped Nalini.

"What a waste of time," cut in Ashok.

"Instead let's go to the zoo."

"Oh, we've been there so often," said Leela.

"Shall we go to India Gate for boating?" suggested Rajan. A unanimous decision was taken on that.

"And are you all planning to fast today?" Uncle Mathan asked with a smile.

"Well...no...we could eat somewhere," Nalini said, suddenly feeling shy.

The two houses were bolted, and the five of them set out in style, in the waiting taxi.

"Let us have lunch somewhere," Uncle Mathan said. "Then, we can go for boating." It was an agreeable proposal.

So, Uncle Mathan took them to a posh restaurant. All four of them sat in awe till the waiter came and gave each one of them a menu card.

"Let us all start with something cool," Uncle Mathan said.

Nalini and Leela shared a bottle of apple juice which they relished. The gentlemen had tall glasses of fresh lime juice.

"Why don't you all relax and talk?" Uncle Mathan said. "There is no law against talking here."

All the children decided to have Biriyani which they loved. Uncle Mathan ordered some curry to go with it. For himself, he ordered a steak. As they enjoyed their meals, they all talked and Uncle Mathan got more acquainted with Leela and Ashok.

"You are really lucky to have such good company of each other," he said. "When I was a young boy, I had no friends in the neighbourhood."

"But that hasn't changed you," Nalini said. "You are like one of us today."

"Yes, maybe I am making up for the good time lost," Uncle Mathan said with a laugh that ended in a sigh.

Their lunch also ended in style, with a variety of ice-creams to choose from. That was one thing Ashok was not shy of — he ordered an ice-cream which, he thought, would be the largest, and it did turn out to be so. Uncle Mathan had black coffee, and by the time the bill was paid, it was already 3 o'clock.

They again piled into a taxi and headed for the boating club near India Gate.

"We'll relax for a while under the shade

of a tree and let the food settle a bit," Uncle Mathan said.

"Can I go and book a boat for 4 o'clock?" Rajan asked hesitantly.

Why not? That is a sensible thought," Uncle Mathan said, and he gave him the money.

"Uncle, do you think the water will be too deep?" Leela asked. "I do not know how to swim."

"You are worried about the boat flipping over," Uncle Mathan asked. "Relax, these boats are flat-bottomed. They cannot turn over. To put your mind at ease, let me tell you, the water is also only waist deep. So, in case you have an adventure, you can walk out of it bravely!"

Leela felt much better after that. And thank god, the boys were out of hearing distance!

They chatted for some time about their school and their hobbies and even politics, much to Uncle Mathan's amazement. On the dot of 4, the boys jumped up and fol-

lowed by the others, they went towards their chosen boat.

"All five of us, will we sit in one boat?" Nalini asked.

"Why not?" Ashok replied. "Don't worry, we won't give the oars to you girls." Uncle Mathan watched on amusedly.

There were quite a few boats being rowed by some couples and some group of youngsters also. Timidly Leela stepped into the boat and sat down at the first instance as it swayed. Uncle Mathan helped Nalini in, and then got in himself. Ashok and Rajan got in and picked up the oars. Uncle Mathan asked for an extra oar, because he knew that in spite of their bragging, they wouldn't be able to shoulder the weight of five people.

Once they set out, Nalini and Leela relaxed a bit and in a little while they enjoyed themselves so much that they broke into a song, "Row-Row-Row a boat, gently down the stream..." loudly, joined by the gruff voice of Uncle Mathan. They surely had many onlookers!

"You boys are rowing pretty well," Uncle Mathan appraised. "Have you been coming here regularly?"

Ashok and Rajan gave the girls a sly look and nodded their heads in affirmation.

"That's where you disappear when you say you are going to your friend's house to study!" Nalini pounced on Rajan.

"I think I have put my foot in my mouth," Uncle Mathan said. "Anyway, they are not wasting their time. Rowing is a good sport."

One hour of rowing and everyone had had enough. They all looked tired, yet very happy.

"And now you deserve ices," Uncle Mathan declared. Orange bars were everyone's favourite. So they headed towards the ice-cream vendor and as they ate the ices, the children began thanking Uncle Mathan profusely, for the wonderful day he had given them. He waved it all off with a loud



laugh and said it was his pleasure to see them all enjoying themselves.

"And now since all good things must come to an end, let's move towards home," Uncle Mathan said. "I shall have to become my age again and sit with your parents for some time." That made everyone laugh.

"Uncle Mathan, when will you be coming

to Delhi again?" Nalini asked.

"Shut up," Rajan reprimanded her, for he knew quite well what thoughts lay behind that question...

"Your will is my command," Uncle bowed down to his niece and hailed a taxi to head for home.

A. S.

(Continued from Page 33)

2103 (D)
Ruchir K. Desai (b, 13)
Jayant Villa
7, A.C.M. Society
V.P. Road, Andheri
Bombay 400058, India
Hobbies: Music, Painting
(U.K., Canada)

2104 (D)
Sumita Dutta (g, 14)
17 B, Ekdalia Place
Calcutta 700019, India
Hobbies: Reading, Stamps
(U.S.A., Poland)

2105 (S)
Siddhartha Sarkar (b, 11)
C/o Dr. S. Sarkar
6 Feeder Road
Ariadah
Calcutta 700057, India
Hobbies: Photography, Stamps
(U.K.)

2106 (B)
Nandini Bhattacharya (g, 13)
Q4 Sankey-Park
Bidhan Nagar
Durgapur-12, West Bengal
Hobbies: Interior Decoration
(W. Germany)

2107 (G)
Tamal Ghosh (b, 13)
B-4/199 Safdarjang Enclave
New Delhi-110016
Hobbies: Stamps, Coins
(U.S.A., France)

2108 (N)
Balvinder Singh Narang (b, 14)
Narang House
Randhir Lane
Karnal 132001, India
Hobbies: Coins, Stamps
(India)

2109 (S)
Suresh Subramaniam (b, 15)
C/o Mr. P.R. Subramaniam
Bolani Ores, Ltd
P.O. Bolani, Dt. Keonjhar
Orissa, India
Hobbies: Photography,
Swimming
(U.S.A., U.K.)

2110 (S)
Rajesh N. Shethia (b, 12)
Shethia Sadan
18, Sewri Wadala Road No. 1
Opp. Don Bosco School Ground
King's Circle, Bombay 400019
Hobbies: Stamps, Coins
(Japan, Switzerland)

2111 (G)
Sriram Gangadharan (b, 11)
2C, Shree Vijaya Bhawan
2 B Altamount Road
Bombay 400026, India
Hobbies: Swimming, Cycling
(Japan, Greece, Italy)

2112 (D)
Anjali Dahiya (g, 11)
5B, New Project
Air Force Station
Agra 282008, India
Hobbies: Stamps, Painting
(Any Arab country)

2113 (K)
Kiranjot Kaur (g, 14)
M. Tara Singh House
Ranjitpura, Amritsar
Punjab, India
Hobbies: Stamps, Coins
(Switzerland, France, Spain)

2114 (K)
S. Keshav (b, 11)
C/o Mr. K.R. Srinivasan
A1/154 Safdarjang Enclave
New Delhi-110016

Hobbies: Reading, Tickets
(Mexico, Japan)

2115 (B)
Pabitra Kumar Baruah (b, 12)
C/o Mr. G.K. Baruah
D.C.'s Office
P.O. Along, Dt. Siang
Arunachal Pradesh, India
Hobbies: Drawing
(Australia)

2116 (S)
Jissnu Saikia (b, 13)
C/o Mr. D.N. Saikia
Lachanmiere
Shillong 793001
Meghalaya, India
Hobbies: Music, Photography
(U.S.S.R., U.S.A.)

2117 (K)
S.R. Suresh Kumar (b, 13)
C/o Mr. S.S. Raghavan
S.S.O., Coal Survey Laboratory
Ranchi 834010, India
Hobbies: Stamps, Story-books
(Russia)

2118 (J)
Thomas Joseph (b, 10)
217 FACT(CD) Township
P.O. Ambalamedu
Via Cochin, India
Hobbies: Philately, Gardening
(U.S.A.)

CORRIGENDUM

2056 (P)
Anna Philip (g, 13)
E-64, Greater Kailash Enclave I
New Delhi-110048, India
Hobbies: Stamps
(Sweden, U.S.A.)

SHANKAR'S INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S COMPETITION 1977

—SPONSORED BY THE JAWAHARLAL NEHRU MEMORIAL FUND—

Rules

Children all over the world can participate in Shankar's International Children's Competition 1977.

Only children below 16, i. e., those born on or after January 1, 1962, can participate in the Competition.

Each entry should be accompanied by a certificate from the parent/guardian or teacher that it is the original and unaltered work of the competitor during 1977.

Each entry should carry the following details. These must be written in BLOCK LETTERS and in ENGLISH, on the back of the painting or at the end of the written work, as the case may be :

- i) Full name of the competitor
- ii) Full address
- iii) Date of birth
- iv) Nationality
- v) Whether boy or girl
- vi) Subject/Title of the entry

Entries which do not carry these details will not be considered.

Entries by more than one competitor can be sent together.

Entries should be addressed to :

Shankar's International Children's Competition
Nehru House
4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi 110002
India

Entries should reach the above address on or before December 31, 1977. Competitors from countries other than India are advised to despatch their entries well in advance to allow sufficient time for transit by surface mail.

Entries will NOT be returned.

Paintings/Drawings

Paintings or drawings may be done in any media, except black lead pencil.

The size of the painting or drawing should NOT be LESS than 30 cm x 40 cm (12" x 16").

11. A competitor may submit upto 6 entries. They must be sent unmounted.

12. Paintings or drawings may be on any subject the competitor has seen or is interested in.

COMBINED WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Written Work

13. Only entries in ENGLISH will be considered.

14. A competitor may submit upto 6 entries.

15. Entries may be in the form of essays, short stories, poems, plays, descriptive writings, etc.

16. The written work may be on any subject the competitor has seen or is interested in.

Prizes

17. The award of prizes will be decided by the organisers of the Competition with the help of a panel of judges.

18. The painting or drawing adjudged the best will be awarded the President of India's Gold Medal. The Vice-President of India's Gold Medal will be given for the best written work. The next 22 best entries will receive the Nehru Memorial Gold Medals. Besides the above, more than 400 Prizes and about 400 Silver Medals will be awarded.

19. No competitor will be awarded more than 2 prizes.

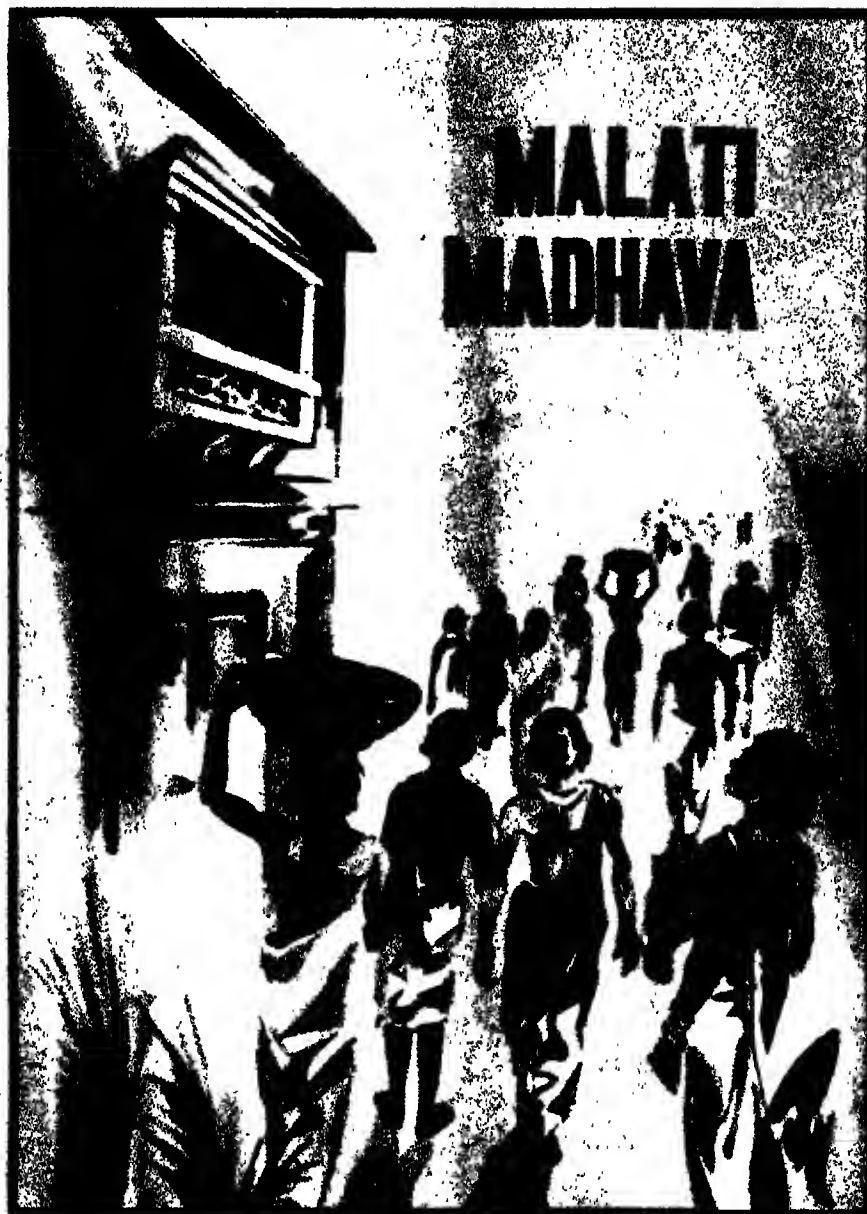
20. The copyright of all entries will rest with the Shankar's International Children's Competition.

21. Among paintings, all those which win prizes other than Silver Medals, and among written entries, all those awarded prizes and a few winning Silver Medals will be published in "Shankar's Children's Art Number Volume 29". Some selected entries will also be published in the "Children's World", a monthly magazine dedicated to the children of the world.

22. All competitors can get "Shankar's Children's Art Number Volume 29" at half-price. Any competitor can reserve a copy.

NOTE: Vol. 29 is expected to be ready by October 1978.

EXHIBENT RELEASES



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CHILDREN'S World

**PUBLISHED EVERY MONTH
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**Editor
SHANKAR**

**Assistant Editor
K. RAMAKRISHNAN**



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Cover: "Xmas Gifts for All" by Ewa Medrzeckw (8) Poland

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**"Children's World" wishes all its readers
A MERRY CHRISTMAS
and a very happy and joyous
NEW YEAR**

*

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
Department of Culture



**Talent Search Scholarships in the field of
Classical Indian Dance, Music, Painting,
Sculpture and Drama**

Applications are invited from candidates for award of Talent Search Scholarships during 1978 in the field of classical forms of Indian dance, music, drama as well as painting and sculpture. Candidates in the age-group 10-14 years, as on the 1st July, 1977 and studying in recognised schools, are eligible.

The number of scholarships to be awarded is about 100. The scholarship is awarded on yearly basis and will be extended from year to year until the completion of the secondary stage of education or upto the age of 18 years whichever is earlier, subject to the awardee maintaining satisfactory progress.

The value of scholarship is :

- (a) Rs. 600/- per year for the child who undergoes specialised training in the schools and/or town where already studying/residing.
- (b) Rs. 1200/- per year where a child is required to join another institution at some other place for purpose of specialised training.

The tuition-fee for the specialised training in the particular field would also be paid by the Government.

The prescribed application forms can be obtained from the office of the Director of Education/Director of Public Instruction of the State Government/Union Territory Administration concerned. The last date for receipt of application by the Director of Public Instruction/Director of Education is 31.12.1977.

Canvassing in any form will disqualify a candidate.



(A Christmas story retold by Minnie P. Swami)

ONCE upon a time—a long, long time ago—there lived a poor little boy in a village in the land of Israel. He lived with his mother and father in a little hut, and they were very poor....so poor, in fact, that every day the little boy had to go to a neighbouring town and earn some money....he was, you see, a little drummer boy.

Every day, the rich traders of the town would walk by the shops in the main market....and every day they would stop in their steps, arrested by a haunting melody. It was a blind piper, and keeping time for him was the little drummer boy. The businessmen were always deeply touched....perhaps by the sweetness of the song, or perhaps by the large brown eyes of the tiny accompanist....and when the song was over, they would throw a penny or two. And when the day was done, the piper and the little drummer boy would split the money, and the latter would take his share home.

But, one day, the little drummer boy's world was shattered. It had been a cold winter, and the scare of bandits looting the

village was worse than ever before. One starry night, the little drummer boy walked back to find his village in ruins, and his home, and all his kith and kin....and he knew that the bandits' handiwork had left him orphaned, homeless, and friendless.

Slowly, he turned away, shocked beyond belief. Sick at heart and utterly stricken, he started walking, clutching his drum as if for safety. He didn't know where he was going or what he would do, and he didn't care. He couldn't even cry....he just kept walking blindly across the vast sandy waste....he trudged mile after mile without realizing what he was doing, until he was too tired to walk a single step more. Then he lay down and fell fast asleep.

The night was silent and all was still. From across the desert they came, tall and majestic, following the brightest star that ever lit the sky....the three wise kings of the Orient. The soft swish of their satin robes broke the great hush across the land, and the gentle murmur of their voices, when they saw the little huddled figure breathing gently, seemed to echo in the night.

One of them bent over and touched the little drummer boy softly.

"Awake, O little one," he said softly. "Why lie you here alone?"

The little drummer boy awoke and was very frightened when he saw the three tall men in their fine silk robes. For a minute he thought it was the bandits, and his little face filled with fear....then he saw the kindness in their eyes, and he breathed more easily.

"I...I am left without shelter," he said. "The bandits...." He could not continue but he quickly asked, "Who be you?"

The three kings looked at each other and then looked at the little drummer boy.

"We are three kings of the Orient," said the first king. "We come from lands far from here, a wonder for to see."

"A new-born king....," whispered the second king. "A sight such as none has seen, and none shall see again!"

"Following yonder royal star we come," added the third. "Bearing our finest gifts, we come, over desert and river and mountain-range....Earth's king for to worship

....
"I bring Gold," said the first king.

"And I bring Myrrh," said the second.

"And I bring Frankincense," said the third. "Come with us to behold him, O little son, lie not here alone."

So the little drummer boy got up and followed them. He didn't have anywhere else to go, and the king of the world was somebody Great and Noble.

They travelled for many nights and many days, over sand and water, over field and mountain. The bright, beautiful star glowed brighter and brighter with every day.. and one night, they reached the top of a mountain and beheld the bright lamplights of a large town beneath. The star stopped, and began to glow so brightly that it seemed to be silver on fire. And a voice spoke softly in the silent night:

"Come forward, O Pilgrims! Your Shrine you have reached. Behold now the sight of all sights....and worship Him, for He is your King."

The voice stopped, and the star led them down the mountain and towards the town. The little drummer boy was expecting a

palace or a large house, but the star, glowing blindingly, stopped some distance away from the town and threw its glorious light on a tiny brown stable.

"Here," whispered the second king, and as they walked towards the stable, the star slowly dimmed, and disappeared.

The stable was tiny, and cold. It glowed in a mysterious, golden way....the little drummer boy knew he was with someone great and Holy....

The ground was covered with hay, and there were cows and sheep and a donkey....two little doves huddled in a corner, and all was silent. The animals' patient eyes were turned to a corner where a shepherd stood, silent and awed....next to him sat a woman, and she looked so much like his own sweet, gentle mother that the little drummer boy's eyes filled. On her face was the most beautiful look the little drummer boy had ever seen on a human face....and beside her lay a manger, and all around the manger was a strange and lovely glow.... and on the manger lay a tiny bundle....

One by one the kings advanced towards the lady and the manger.

The first king bowed low, and knelt before the manger.

"For you, O great one," he whispered, and lay his box of gold at the sleeping babe's feet.

The second king, and the third king followed him, and laid their presents next to his.

The little drummer boy's turn was next, and he didn't know what to do. He only had his drum with him, and the torn cloth he wrapped around his body. He bowed before the lady and then knelt by the cradle-manger. For a long time, he just looked at the baby, and he could not move. And then, suddenly, the baby's eyes opened, and looked straight at the little drummer boy.

And the little drummer boy knew what to do.

"O Holy one," he whispered, "I am a poor boy....I have no gifts worthy of a king such as you. I will play my drum for you, O King....I will play my best to honour you."

And so the little drummer boy played his drum, and played as he had never before

...soon the cows and the sheep and even the donkey were keeping time and the doves cooed a melody, and when it was over, the little drummer boy put down his drum, and knelt before the manger, and looked at the sweet baby who lay there.

"Have I made you happy?" he asked the new-born king earnestly. "Say you liked it, O King!"

And the little king raised his eyes to him
...and smiled.....

I wonder whether I have done justice to what I think is the loveliest story of all time! I just hope the little hero—he was only 6 years old when it took place—will speak for himself, and you will get the message! I should also tell you that I saw a televised version of this story some years ago, and I have, therefore, had to add and subtract a little from the original story...the Little Drummer Boy's village *was* destroyed by bandits, though, and he *did* play his drum, and the most beautiful part, the end is true, too. I just hope you liked this story as much as I did (and do!). And for those of you who are interested in dramatics, there is a musical play version of the same story elsewhere in this issue. Maybe you'll put it up this Xmas!

M.P.S.

"JESOUS AHATONHIA"

(J.E. Middleton's translation of the first Canadian Christmas carol is given below.)

'Twas in the moon of winter time when all the birds had fled,
That Mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead.
Before their light the stars grew dim,
Ane wand'ring hunters heard the hymn:
"Jesus, your King, is born;
Jesus is born;
In Excelsis Gloria!"

Within a lodge of broken bark the tender Babe was found.
A ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped His beauty 'round
And as the hunter braves drew nigh,
The angel song rang loud and high:
"Jesus, your King," etc.

The earliest moon of winter time is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory on the helpless Infant there.
While Chiefs from far before Him knelt,
With gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
"Jesus, your King," etc.

O children of the forest free, O sons of Manitou,
The Holy Child of earth and heav'n is born today for you.
Come, kneel before the radiant Boy
Who brings you beauty, peace and joy.
"Jesus, your King," etc.

(See page 14)

A TRUE STORY

A LETTER TO SANTA CLAUS

IT happened on a cold, dark, November afternoon in 1954. The wind and rain beat against Lothar Meyer, as he walked home with his eyes on the road. He did not run home. Why should he? His mother wouldn't be there.

His younger brother and sister would be quarrelling as usual. His elder sister, Edith, would be trying her best to pacify them or busy tidying up the place. Then she would dry the dishes left over from lunch and start frying potatoes for dinner. Lothar hated fried potatoes. He didn't mind eating them once or twice a week. Even three times would have been tolerable, if they were served along with a fried egg or a sausage. But to eat plain fried potatoes in the evenings every single day of the week and sometimes for lunch, too, was hardly tempting to come home to.

Lothar wiped his face with the sleeve of his coat. He wished his father was still alive. Even during the years of his illness, things had never been as bad as they were now. Today, in order to earn enough money, his mother worked as an insurance agent during the day and as a nurse at night, at the local hospital. She was hardly ever at home. And when she was, she looked so weary and drawn, and her eyes were always worried and sad. She had forgotten how to smile. A strange knot formed in Lothar Meyer's throat. He kicked angrily at a stone. Kicked it real hard and then kicked it out of sight.

Tears pricked his eyes, blurring his vision. And when he looked down again, he saw something lying on the pavement. It was a wet and tattered but very colourful journal all the same!

Lothar bent down to pick it up carefully. It was soaking wet. He rolled it up and pressed it under his arm. And then he ran all the way back home.

As he entered, he caught the smell of roast potatoes.

"Edith," he cried as he opened the kitchen door, "look, what I have found."

His younger brother and sister both cried together: "We want to see it. Let us see it, please."

But Edith carefully took the paper in her hands and spread it over the oven to dry.

And after the three younger children had gone to bed, both of them bent over the journal and read it page by page. How beautiful the pictures were. A woman in a pretty dress smiled back at them. And there were pictures of an island named Hawaii, where the sea was green and the beaches yellow, and the palm trees swayed gently bright under a blue sky.

Then there were pictures of a horse, which had just won a race. It was a magnificent horse, graceful and strong.

And, suddenly, they looked straight into the laughing face of Santa Claus, who lived in America. It said that he promised to fulfil the wishes of all the little children who wrote to him.

Lothar Meyer and his sister looked at each other and read the story once more.

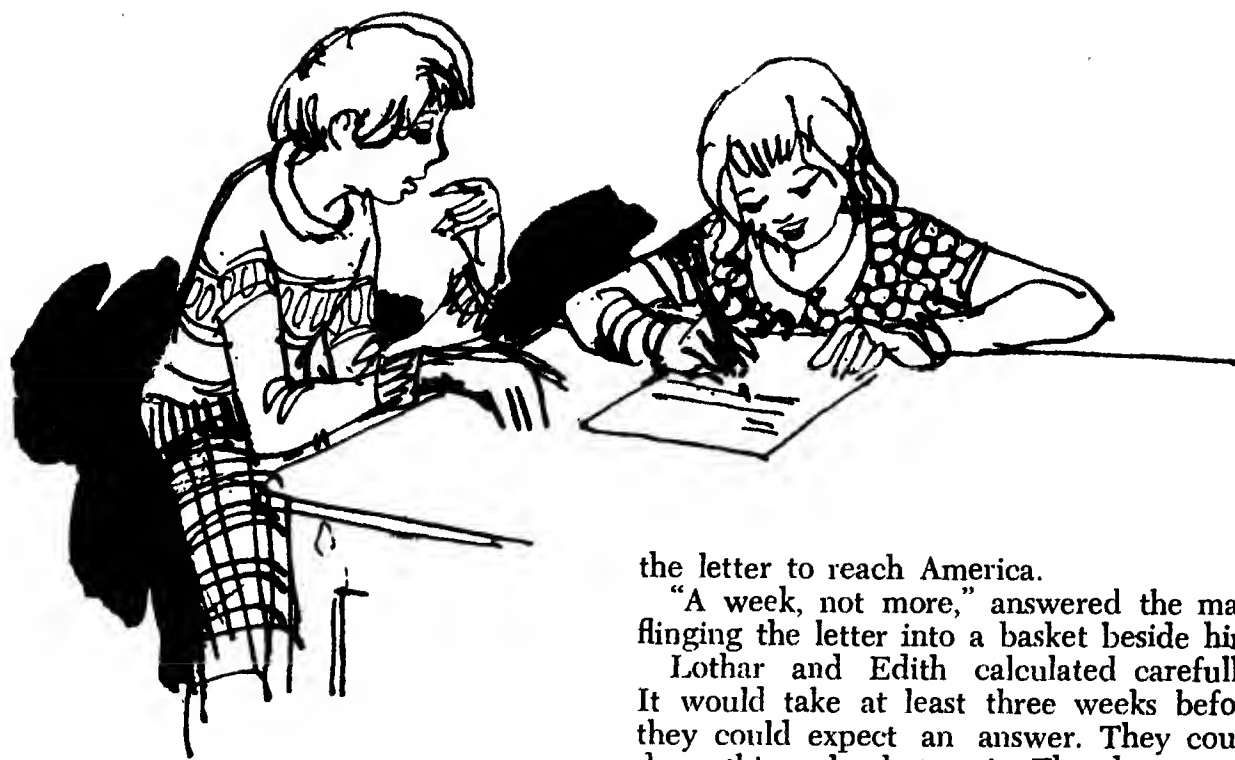
Could it be possible? Could Santa Claus really fulfil every child's hopes and wishes?

"Lothar!" whispered Edith, "should we write him a letter? Do you think he could help us?"

"Maybe," answered Lothar, a little doubtfully. "But we are not living in America. We are here in Germany and that is far away from where he is."

"Let us try," insisted his sister. "Maybe he will help us. Come, I'll get some paper."

Edith Meyer tore out a page from her



copybook and wrote in her best handwriting:

Dear Santa Claus,

We have heard about you and would like to ask you for help. Since my father's death, my mother has to work during the day as well as during the night.

She has no time for us and we miss her a lot.

We have many wishes, but what we want most of all is a new daddy—one who would love us and whom we would love in return.

The most wonderful thing would be if our new daddy were a farmer, for we all love horses.

With love from,

Edith and Lothar Meyer

They read the letter very carefully and checked all the spellings. Then Edith folded it and pushed it into an envelope. They promised not to tell anybody about it, not even their mother. When they went to bed, Lothar kept the letter under his pillow.

At the post office the next day, they pushed the letter over the counter and asked the postmaster how long it would take for

the letter to reach America.

"A week, not more," answered the man, flinging the letter into a basket beside him.

Lothar and Edith calculated carefully. It would take at least three weeks before they could expect an answer. They could do nothing else but wait. The days seemed to drag on, as Christmas approached. Three weeks had passed, still there was no letter. Hadn't Santa Claus received their letter? Everyday they would run home from school and look into the letter box, but would always find it empty. Had it got lost? Lothar and Edith worried a great deal.

Four days before Christmas, they found two letters in the box addressed to Mrs. Meyer. Lothar and Edith placed them on the dining table and waited for their mother to return home.

Edith Meyer tidied the flat even better than usual, while Lothar dried the dishes. Their hearts raced with excitement, because they knew the letters were from America.

Later in the evening, their mother came home. Her hat was covered with snow, her shoes were wet, and her face was white with cold. The children sat around the table and looked up at her.

"My dears," asked Mrs. Meyer, "what has happened? What is wrong?"

"Nothing, mother, nothing," answered the children, and Lothar took his mother's coat and hung it up beside the oven to dry.

"I am tired," sighed Mrs. Meyer and fell heavily into a chair by the table. For a moment she closed her eyes. Her hands dropped on the table top, right on the letters.

She opened her eyes with a start. "A letter?" she frowned. "For me? From America? I don't know anybody in America."

She opened it. Her eyes flew over the lines. "Wish to Help," she read aloud. "We would like to offer some financial aid or any other assistance we can, in order to help you in your situation."

Mrs. Meyer's face was pale as she looked at her children. "What does all this mean? What have you done?" she demanded. She wanted to scold them, explain to them that even if they were poor, they should never ask for charity, but as she looked into their big, sad eyes, she simply said, "Edith, what has happened?"

So Edith and Lothar told her how they happened to write to the American Santa Claus. They had not asked for money. All that they wanted was a father and a mother who would stay at home with them the whole day.

Mrs. Meyer did not interrupt them. When they had finished, her voice was

very gentle as she said, "I understand."

The next day, more letters arrived from people in America, offering help and aid. And, one day, there came a letter from Mr. Lokie Ryan. Ryan was a millionaire, who owned a ranch in Mississippi. A ranch with more than twenty square miles of cotton fields and acres and acres of golden wheat. With herds of cattle and beautiful horses. Dense forests and deep blue lakes for fishing. He had everything he could think of, but no family. If they wished to come, they would be welcome to his home and his hearth.

Lothar Meyer and his brother and sisters liked this letter most of all. They saw themselves riding on horseback over the beautiful farm, through cotton fields, and over meadows where cowboys watched over cattle.

Lothar loved cowboys. He wanted to become one himself...he had dreamt of it for a long time.

They sat down and wrote two more letters to America. One to thank Santa Claus



for all his help and another to Mr. Lokie Ryan inviting him to come to Germany.

And one day in April, Mr. Ryan came.

He was tall and a little bent, and his face had many wrinkles. But his eyes were young and friendly.

"Hi!" said Mr. Lokie Ryan and looked at them closely. At Lothar Meyer, in his old faded pants and his bright blue eyes. At Edith in her mended stockings and her golden hair, combed into two neat plaits. He looked at the smaller ones, who were hiding behind their mother's skirt. And he looked at Mrs. Meyer, who welcomed him into her home. And then they sat around the table and had coffee and cake. The cake was delicious. It was a long time since Mr. Ryan had eaten such wonderful homemade cakes.

They laughed and spoke about America and Germany, and cattle and horses and,

The Glow-Worm

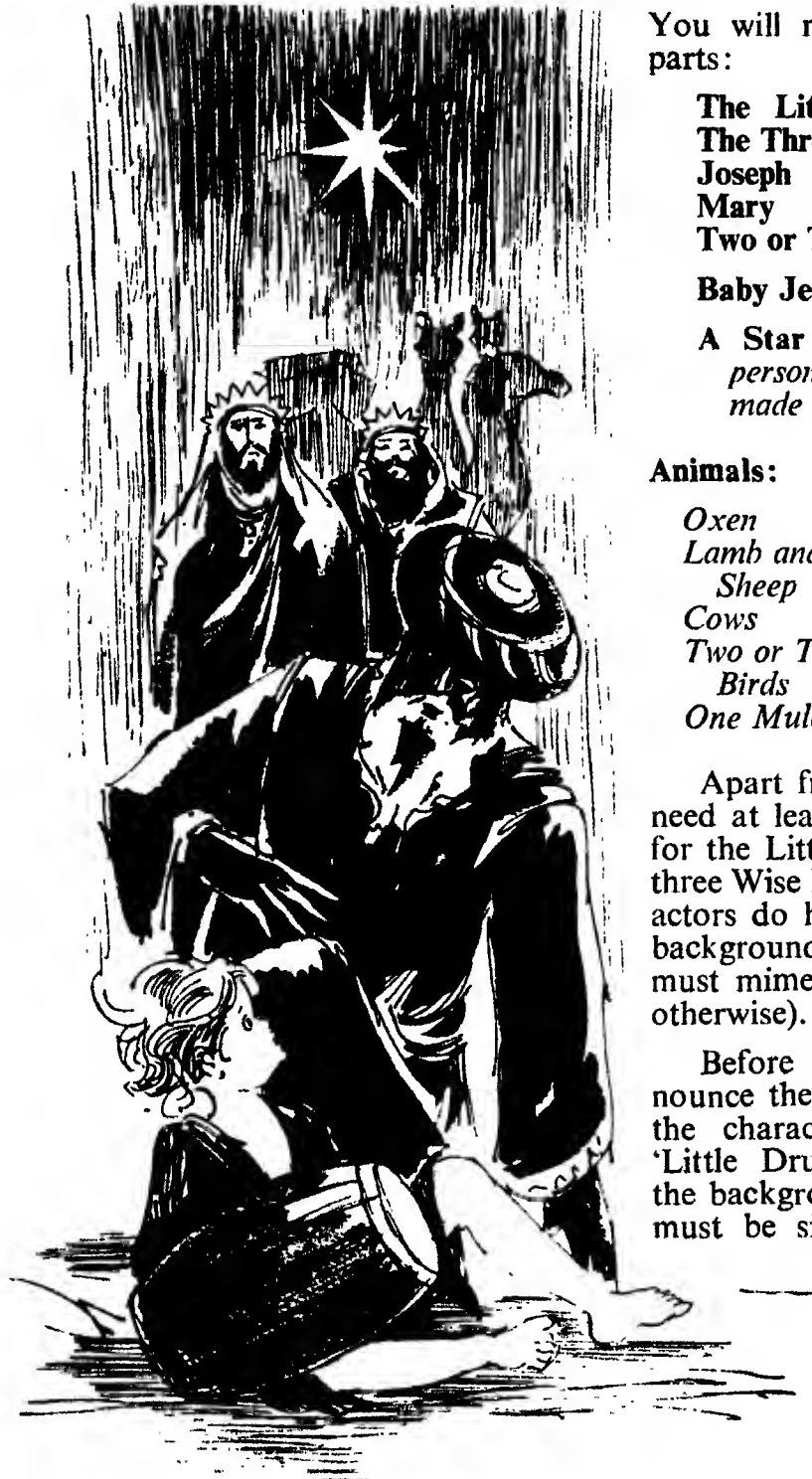
Listen, dear friends, to this little tale,
Of a rainy night and brewing gale.
It was a time for glow-worms bright—
That hour on this dark and drizzling night.
On his window sat a little boy,
Watching the night with wondrous joy.
When all at once, like a fire-spark,
A glow-worm glowed in that deepest dark.
All a-wonder at a sight so grand,
The boy caught the worm with his eager hand.

'I'll not release you,' he began,
'Till I see you shine in the morning sun.'
'In the morning sun my glow will die,
I tell the truth, I do not lie.'
The boy heard this in much surprise,
'In the morning sun shine the tree and bark,
The dew on flowers, and the children's park.

Kum Kum Yadav

THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY

(A Musical One-act Play)



You will need 'actors' for the following parts:

The Little Drummer Boy

The Three Wise Kings

Joseph

Mary

Two or Three Shepherds

Baby Jesus (*You can have a doll, instead*)

A Star (optional) (*You may have a person dressed like a star or a star made of cardboard*)

Animals:

Oxen

Lamb and

Sheep

Cows

Two or Three

Birds

One Mule

(*If possible, you can have people dressed up as animals and birds. This will help in the last scene, but painted stage props will be equally fine.*)

Apart from these stage-actors, you will need at least five background voices: one for the Little Drummer Boy, three for the three Wise Kings, and one more. The stage-actors do have lines to say, but when the background voices sing or speak, they must mime the words (unless you prefer it otherwise).

Before the curtain rises, you can announce the name of the play and those of the characters, with the music to the 'Little Drummer Boy' playing *softly* in the background. As the curtain rises, there must be silence.

SCENE 1

(An expanse of land, with a mountain or a river in the background. Everything is silent. In the centre of the stage lies the Little Drummer Boy, huddled and hugging his drum. After a few moments, slowly fade in the music to the song 'Silent Night', keeping it very soft. As it starts, there appears a light, and gradually a star appears and moves slowly across the stage. Following it are the three Wise Kings. They walk slowly, and when they near the sleeping body, one of them spies it, and they stop. (Now fade out 'Silent Night') The kings walk up to the body.)

First King: *(Bending over and touching the little drummer boy):*

Awake, O little one! Why lie you here alone? Awake!

(The little drummer boy wakes with a start and draws back in fright)

Little Drummer Boy: Wh...Who b...be you? I be orphaned and homeless, so I lie here alone. Th...the bandits....
(The kings look at each other)

First King: We are three kings of the Orient
We come from lands far from here....
a wonder for to see.

Second King: *(Whispering and in awe)*
A new-born king! A sight such as none
has seen before.... and none shall see
again!

Third King: *(Pointing to the star)* Following
yonder bright star we come; bearing our
finest gifts we come...over desert and
river and mountain range, Earth's King
for to worship.

First King: Come with us and behold Him
O sqn. Lie not here alone.

Drummer Boy: I come, O gracious kings,
this 'miracle to behold! *(He gets up,
holding his drum)*

Third King: Be that your drum, little one?

Drummer Boy: Yes, o wise king! I am a
drummer boy.....

*(The star moves off, and the three kings
and the little drummer boy follow it)*

(Note: The light in this scene must be
very dim so as to heighten the
brightness of the star.)

SCENE 2

(For this scene, you will need at least 5 background voices (you can have more in the chorus). There are 4 main voices, one for the little drummer boy and three for the kings. As scenery, a mountain and a river will be enough. As the three kings and the little drummer boy follow the star round and round the stage, the song below is to be sung in the background 'The Little Drummer Boy')

(Drummer Boy)	So, they told me	1
(Chorus)	Pa Ra-Pa Pum-Pum	2
(Drummer Boy)	A new-born king to see	3
(Chorus)	Pa Ra-Pa Pum-Pum	4
(3 Kings)	Our finest gifts we bring	5
(Chorus)	Pa Ra-Pa Pum-Pum	6
(3 Kings)	To lay before the King	7
(Chorus)	Pa Ra-Pa-Pum-Pum	8
	Ra-Pa-Pa-Pum-Pum	9
	Ra-Pa-Pum-Pum	10
(3 Kings)	So, to honour him	11
(Chorus)	Pa Ra-Pa Pum-Pum	12
(3 Kings)	When we come	13

(In this song, all the Chorus lines (2,4,6, 8,9,10, and 12) stay constant, while the others change (lines 1,3,5,7, 11 and 13). When this song is used again, only these changed lines will be given, and you must fit in the rest.)

(When the song is over, the music fades, and the lights dim so that the star glows very brightly (or else you can suddenly flood the stage with lights that flicker). The music to 'O Come All Ye Faithful' starts softly in the background, and a background voice speaks. The three kings and the little drummer boy stop.)

Background voice: Come forward, O Pilgrims! Your shrine you have reached.
Behold now the sight of all sights...
and worship Him, for he is your King.
(They follow the star off stage, and 'O Come All Ye Faithful' fades out.)



SCENE 3

(This scene is almost entirely musical. It is set in a tiny stable, with hay covering the ground. In the centre is the manger and sitting next to it is the Virgin Mary...standing beside her is Joseph. There are sheep, cows, oxen, lamb, two or three birds, and a mule. A glowing effect can be attained by carefully concealed candles. The three kings and the little drummer boy enter the stage opposite the side where two or three shepherds are standing. They stand for a moment; then the music to 'We Three Kings' begins and they move forward. The little drummer boy stands back.)

Background voices for 3 Kings:

We three kings of Orient are
 Bearing gifts we travel afar,
 Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
 Following yonder star,
 O, Star of wonder, Star of night,
 Star of royal beauty bright,
 Westward leading, still proceeding
 Guide us to thy perfect light.
(First king advances with gift)

Background voice for first King:

Born a king on Bethlehem's plain,
 Gold I bring to crown Him again,

King forever, ceasing never,
 Over us all to reign.

*(He places his present and steps back;
 the second king advances)*

Background voice for second King:

Frankincense to offer have I
 Incense owns a Deity high,
 Prayer and praising, all men raising,
 Worship Him, God most high.

*(He places his present and steps back;
 the third king advances)*

Background voice for third King:

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
 Breathes a life of gathering gloom,
 Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
 Sealed in a stone-cold tomb.

(He places his present and steps back)

All three voices:

Glorious now, behold him arise;
 King and God and sacrifice;

Alleluia, Alleluia, Earth to the Heavens
replies
O, Star of wonder, Star of night,
Star of royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, ever proceeding
Guided to thy perfect light.

(After this, there is a short silence. Then the lights dim, and the little drummer boy advances to the centre of the stage and stops a little in front of the manger (Try to focus a spotlight on him here). In the next song, there are no 'voice movements' by the actor, because the little drummer boy is supposed to think the words. The song is sung gently and slowly.)

Voice for the Drummer Boy:

Baby Jesus,	1
I am a poor boy too	3
I have no gift to bring	5
That's fit to give a king	7
Shall I play for you?	11
On my drum?	13

(The chorus lines are very, very softly sung.)

(Here, the beat becomes a little faster, for the next 10 lines (including chorus lines). The little drummer boy mimes playing his drum, and if you have real people dressed up as animals, they can stamp their feet at the appropriate place.)

Marionette,	1
The ox and lamb kept time	3
I played my drum for Him	5
I played my best for Him	7

(Now, while lines 8, 9 and 10 go on, the tempo suddenly decreases till there is a hush. The little drummer boy goes to the manger and kneels by its side. The last two lines are very gentle, and very slowly sung.)

Then, he smiled at me....
—me and my drum.....

(The curtain closes)

Note: Remember that the last two stanzas of the 'Little Drummer Boy', which close the play, are the most important, and must be sung clearly, softly and effectively! The light effects are not very important, unless you are interested in staging this play at school. The songs in this play—'Silent Night', 'O Come All Ye Faithful', and 'We Three Kings'—are well-known, except 'The Little Drummer Boy'. The notes to the song are given here; if you are interested in staging this play, ask your Music Teacher to teach you the tune.

M.P.S.

MY TEDDY

I HAVE a little teddy; Tommy is his name. He is very clumsy, greedy, and naughty.

Once he did a dreadful thing.

When it was bedtime, I went to bed with my teddy.

But when it was midnight, my teddy crept across the floor to the dining table.

There he found a pan of vegetables on the dining table.

He pulled a chair and climbed the dining table and took off the lid of the pan.

He sat on the table and ate up all the vegetables.

I opened my eyes rather quickly at night and saw Tommy the teddy was not there.

I got out of my bed quickly and crept to see what Tommy was doing.

But when I saw what he was doing, I thought I would go back into my bedroom.

I crept soundless into my bedroom and lay in my bed with my eyes open.

When Tommy had finished his meal, he came into my bedroom and lay down to sleep!

Padmanabha Ramachandran (6)

CHRISTMAS THEMES ON STAMPS

STYLISED representations of the Nativity are featured on this year's stamps for Christmas recently issued by Solomon Islands. They come in four values: 6c (cents), 20c, 35c, and 45c and depict, in consecutive order, the Shepherds with their flocks, Mary and the Infant Jesus in the stable, the Three Kings, and Mary, Joseph and the Infant Jesus fleeing. The stamps were designed by Shamir Brothers.

Christmas stamps from Britain depict 'The Twelve Days of Christmas'—a traditional British Christmas song. All twelve gifts in the song, like 'a partridge in a pear tree', 'five gold rings', 'seven swans a-swimming',

and 'eleven ladies dancing'—one gift for each of the twelve days—are featured in the set of six stamps. The collection is of particular interest to children, who will be able to build up a picture story in colour of this festive song.

The Nativity story, with a truly Canadian flavour, is the subject of three Christmas stamps issued by Canada.

The stamps, in 10—, 12—, and 25—cent denominations, are based on the first Canadian Christmas carol, "Jesous Ahatonhia". Although the carol was originally written in the Huron language by Father Jean de Brebeuf, both the English and French adaptations are well-known. All three languages have been used on the stamps, making them the first trilingual ones issued by the Canada Post Office.

It is told that soon after disease and warfare decimated the Huron nation, a few of the half-starved survivors straggled into Quebec, bringing with them word of Canada's first Christmas carol. Father Brebeuf, a missionary, had composed the carol sometime around 1641.

Brebeuf arrived in New France in 1625, hoping to bring salvation to the Indians. After roving with the Montagnais for five wintry months, he departed for the Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe region, home of the Huron Confederacy. His work was difficult. Only complex political negotiations could convince the Hurons to take him on the gruelling voyage to their country. Later, when plagues ravaged the natives, some threatened to kill Brebeuf and his colleagues, suspecting that they had created the diseases through witchcraft. The Iroquois, hereditary enemies of the Hurons, captured Brebeuf in 1649 and put him to death.

The new-found faith of the converts, no doubt, consoled Brebeuf throughout these



trials. In 1642, he noted with pleasure that the "Indians have a particular devotion for the night that was enlightened by the birth of the Son of God.... Even those who were at a distance of more than two days' journey met at a given place to sing hymns in honour of the new-born Child." One of the hymns was Brebeuf's own "Jesous Ahathonhia".

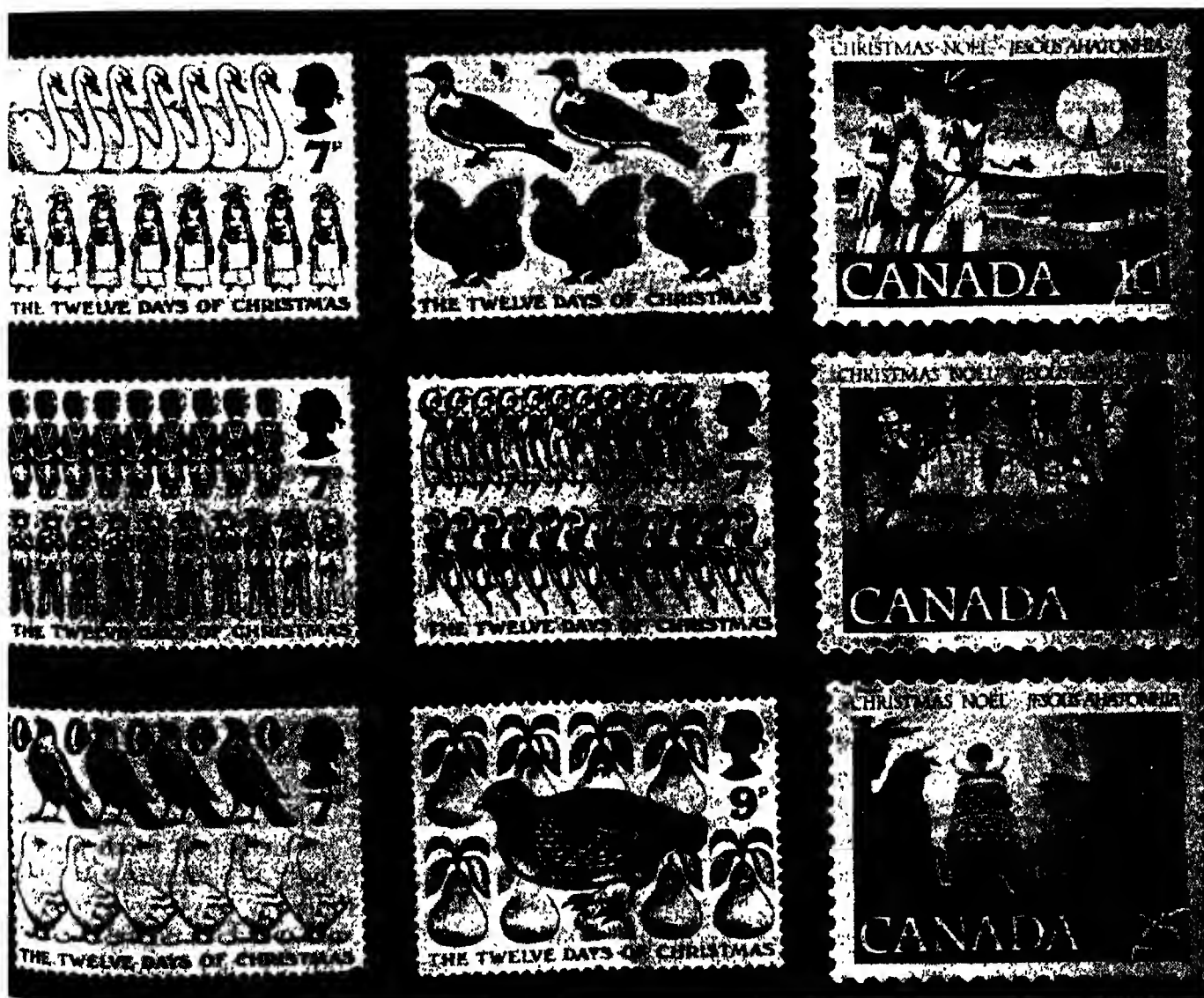
Ronald G. White, artist and illustrator of children's books, has used in the three stamps North American Indian motifs to create a fanciful and reverent setting for the Nativity story. On the 10c stamp, the three hunter braves follow the star to the

lodge where the infant is found. The 12c stamp shows the angelic choir in the subtle and radiant glow of the northern lights in the night sky. The 25c stamp depicts the Christ Child, surrounded by the "ring of glory," blessing the "Chiefs from far" and their gifts.

"Christmas is a religious celebration to be enjoyed by all, but it is particularly a time for children, and I think the designs chosen this year evoke the wonder and excitement that children experience at this time of the year," said Canada's Post Master General Jean Jacques Blais, while announcing the release of the stamps.

(Courtesy : BIS and Canadian High Commission)

(Turn to page 5 for an English rendering of "Jesous Ahathonhia")



AND NOW ELECTRIC CARS!

A SCIENTIST once remarked that if an alien being were to watch our big cities, such as New York, Moscow, and Bombay, he may carry a curious impression of earthlings, that they are cuboid in shape, have two blinking round eyes, and excrete a harmful gas! The alien would have observed no creature other than a motor car! So many cars are there in these cities. He can't also go wrong if he observes that air over these cities, in comparison to other areas on earth, is highly polluted, which may one day effect the whole earth's atmosphere.

Today, among the formidable enemies of environmentalists and energy analysts are the fuel-driven, noxious gas-spewer vehicles—our urban transportation means. Though they have given us mobility and independence, they are not only putting a great load on our fossil-fuel resources and spoiling our atmosphere, but are also a health hazard.



Prince Charles of England is seen here being briefed on an electric car before taking a test drive. It is reported that he was so impressed with its performance that he borrowed it for a further week's trial! The car shown here is an aluminium-bodied two-seater, designed primarily for town and city use. It is powered by eight 12 volt lead acid batteries, and has a top speed of 40 mph (65 km/h). The absence of resistive controls ensures that no energy is wasted in the traction circuits between batteries and the motor. The built-in battery charger is capable of charging the batteries in 8 hours from a standard domestic 13 amp socket outlet.

The noise they produce deafens us, affecting us physiologically; and the fumes from their exhaust causes respiratory and lung diseases. Moreover, as the carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere is increasing by three per cent every year, all its subsequent effects, for example, depletion of 'life-gas oxygen' in the atmosphere, raising of earth's temperature, etc., would result in a severe limitation on life on the earth within the next 50 years.

All this is alarming—the threat posed by the world's present 300,000,000 cars, and the efforts to combat it. Dr. Mostafa Tolba, Director of the United Nation's Environmental Programme, has urgently pressed for the introduction of "safe, durable, low energy, light cars" in harmony with our environment. The electric car just fits the description and has other advantages over the conventional one. As it contains very few wearing parts (compared to 700 in a conventional car, it has only 27) no large-scale maintenance is required during its life time. Driving it, one would face less embarrassing moments as it has less chances of breaking down. Noiseless and smokeless, it would not suffocate and confuse people on roads; even in tunnels the air would be pure and sweet. At a mere press of a switch, it can start and its electric braking system is also more efficient than the one in our present day cars.

An electric car derives energy for its locomotion from a set of batteries inside it, just as these days they are being used for lighting and starting purposes. These batteries, which produce electric energy by electro-chemical reactions, are storage batteries because, like the cells in a torch, they store energy and release it continuously for a long time. But unlike a torch cell, these batteries can be recharged, can be used again and again, until its fuel elements get exhausted.

Research on such cars is in progress in many countries, in particular the U.S.A., U.K., Denmark, Sweden, Japan, Australia, and the U.S.S.R. In the U.S.A., research for better storage batteries in space vehicles has led to the production of expensive but efficient batteries, for example, of silver-zinc, nickel-cadmium, and sodium-sulphur.

Now, the driving range of an electric car, i.e., the distance it can cover when once its batteries are charged, has been increased from 112 km to 256 km. Researches are on to stretch this range further. Work on air-batteries is presently in the experimental stage, but when their production would be possible, not only would batteries of higher capacities available but they would also be cheap. A breakthrough in this field is awaited and as soon it comes, fuel-driven cars would no more be spoiling our earth..

A year ago, India's Vehicle Research Development Establishment in Ahmednagar, put on trial a prototype of a battery-powered vehicle. With a half-ton payload capacity, the prototype would be developed to serve as a milk or postal van or for use in factories where noise and smoke is undesirable. Some tests have also recently been conducted on mini-electric cars developed privately by some enthusiasts. The



This is a silent, pollution-free, relatively inexpensive-to-run vehicle, with a top speed of about 55 mph (90km/h) and a projected range of around 100 miles (160km) on a single charge. Power comes from a pack of lead acid batteries carried in a detachable tray under the floor for ease of exchange - which takes no longer than refuelling a conventional vehicle. Drive is through a 55 bhp motor located transversely at the front, level with the floor of the driving compartment.

commercial production of the battery-driven two-wheeler **Electroped-24** and three-wheeler **Electrotrike-36** is, however, in the offing.

Today, the popularity of the electric car is fastly catching up. In 1970, about 300 of them were used in "EXPO' 70" in the confines of Osaka. Lead acid batteries were in use during the Munich Olympics '72. America's biggest electric car, **Sundancer**, is a well known model. There is also a report claiming that electric taxicab service might soon be in operation on the London streets. A few years ago, a small fleet of electric Bedford vans was also put into service by the British Post Office in London. What to say more, the first space vehicle on the moon called LEM (Mooncraft) was battery driven.

According to W.T. Ylvisaker, Chairman of Gould Inc., by late 1980s, close to 7,000,000 electric cars would be on the U.S. roads "because of continuing extensive research to develop more powerful batteries." General Electric Company of France has also decided to put on the streets at least 150,000 cars, about ten percent of the total number of cars expected in the country by 1985.

"Electric cars would not come overnight," says Dr. Albert Landgrebe of the U.S. Energy and Research Development Agency, which is sponsoring a big project for electric car development, "but there should be a significant number of them on the road by the end of this century."

When all the present fuel-driven cars would be replaced, the environment of our cities would be quite fresh and healthy as is obtained in rural areas. The cars would make no visible effects on our surroundings, except that we would come across a large number of battery charging or selling stations instead of petrol stations, where batteries could be replaced or recharged within a few minutes. The electric car would have the added advantage in that its batteries could also be charged at leisure with a simple apparatus in your home garage.

Dilip M. Salwi

FAMOUS ARTISTS—4



YOUNG John Constable, the miller's son, and his friend John Dunthorne were painting in a room they had rented as a studio, in the Suffolk village of East Bergholt. Their canvas fixed to their easels, they were turning into finished pictures, sketches done in the countryside.

Such a scene was often witnessed in the village before Constable became famous as a great landscape painter. Dunthorne, the local plumber, though quite a talented painter himself, often stood back to admire his friend's work.

Presently, the two Johns washed their brushes, put away their paints, and turned to the other pastime they enjoyed together—making music. Constable sat on a painting stool playing his flute, while Dunthorne performed on the violin he had made himself.

Constable (1776-1837) worked for his father. But he wanted to be an artist. At last getting his way, he rode off to London by coach to start the many years of study and struggle which were to be the prelude to his fame. The faithful Dunthorne stood waving farewell.



DURING his early training in London, Constable worked—as indeed he always worked—with tireless determination. He set up his easel before a large window in his room and there he stood painting as long as the light was good. In the evenings, he drew till late by candlelight.

Constable, the country boy, became a masterly painter of country scenes. His pictures were soaked with the charm and quiet beauty of rural England. They could be dramatic, too. Constable's clouds rolled across the sky, like great ships at sea.

He had a profound influence on the art of his day. Scorning the old school of classical painters who produced 'typical' landscapes in their studios, he turned, instead, with brushes charged with vivid colour, to the glories of nature as he observed it in the countryside.

His use of colour was sometimes questioned. For instance, scoffed the critics, who ever saw grass the green that Constable painted it in his picture 'The Hay-Wain'? Grass had always been painted in a brown tone. Constable was stung to a telling reply.

JOHN CONSTABLE



GATHERING a few of the critics together, he produced an old brown violin and a sample of his own green paint and put them down, side by side, on a patch of grass. "Now you can see for yourselves that grass is the colour I painted it," he exclaimed in triumph.

In 1803, Constable made a month's sea voyage from London. At Chatham he hired a boat and sketched warships lying in the River Medway, including the 'Victory' which, two years later, was to win immortal fame as Admiral Nelson's flagship at the Battle of Trafalgar.

When eventually he was acclaimed in Britain (and in France, where his work was adored) as a great master, Constable's London home was never without visitors wanting to see his work. These 'morning flies', as he called them, seriously held up his production.

So much so, he had to paint furiously to meet his commissions. And when the Royal Academy exhibitions were drawing near, nothing mattered to him but the picture in hand. He worked to exhaustion, often leaving untouched the meals his wife brought to the studio.



EVEN when he went to bed, he could not forget his picture. His son Lionel, who as a small child slept in the studio, recalled seeing him, wearing a dressing gown and carrying a candle, creeping in and taking up his brushes to put some finishing touches.

Constable's great rival, throughout his career, was J.M.W. Turner, who was so jealous of Constable's success that once he daubed one of his own Academy pictures with a red blob to detract from the colour of one of Constable's hanging near by. Constable was aghast at the effect.

Turner, to his credit, altered the blob before the pictures were publicly shown—and it was he who, in 1829, was first to congratulate Constable on being elected an R.A. The old rivals sat talking—between walls lined with Constable's pictures—until early morning.

Despite his busy life in London, Constable went back to East Bergholt whenever he could, wandering again, with his sketchbook and pencils, among the scenes in which he had rambled with Dunthorne, drawing again the bridges, streams and farms which had first inspired him.

(Courtesy : B/S)

MAII AND KOFI

(An African Tale of Magic and Mystery Retold by Alaka Shankar)

THERE was once a brave and powerful Chief who had a very beautiful daughter named Maii. He loved her so much that when she came of age, he could not bear the thought of giving her away in marriage.

So, he devised a plan to keep her. He got two swords made, each sharp-edged on both sides, so sharp that they could cut even a hair floating in the air. Then he sent a proclamation far and wide that he would give the hand of his beautiful daughter in marriage to any person who would take a blow each on his neck with the two swords.

There were many noble and wealthy suitors for the lovely Maii, but very few had the courage to pass the strange endurance test. Soon, the news reached the ears of Kofi, the son of another powerful Chief. From the moment he heard of the beauty of Maii, he lost interest in everything else and started preparing for his journey. He ordered for her jewels set with precious stones and gorgeous gowns made out of the finest silks available.

As Kofi neared the village of Maii, he saw the beautiful girl and her friends going to the river for their bath. The sight of her loveliness made him all the more determined to win her hand. But before he went through the cruel test, he wanted to speak to her once. So, he went to the tree under which their clothes lay and picked up the loveliest gown. Then he hid behind a tree. When the girls returned from their bath, they all put on their gowns, except Maii, who couldn't find her dress.

Kofi stepped forward and said, "Don't be angry with me. I have come here to pass the endurance test. But before I lose my head, I wanted to have at least a chance to talk to you."

Maii was flattered by the words of this handsome young man. She said, "I can help you save your head if you take my advice.

When my father strikes you, whisper my name thrice. This charm will always help you."

Kofi thanked her for her tip and went to face the powerful Chief, who seemed impressed by the brave youth. He warned him that his swords could cut even a floating hair.

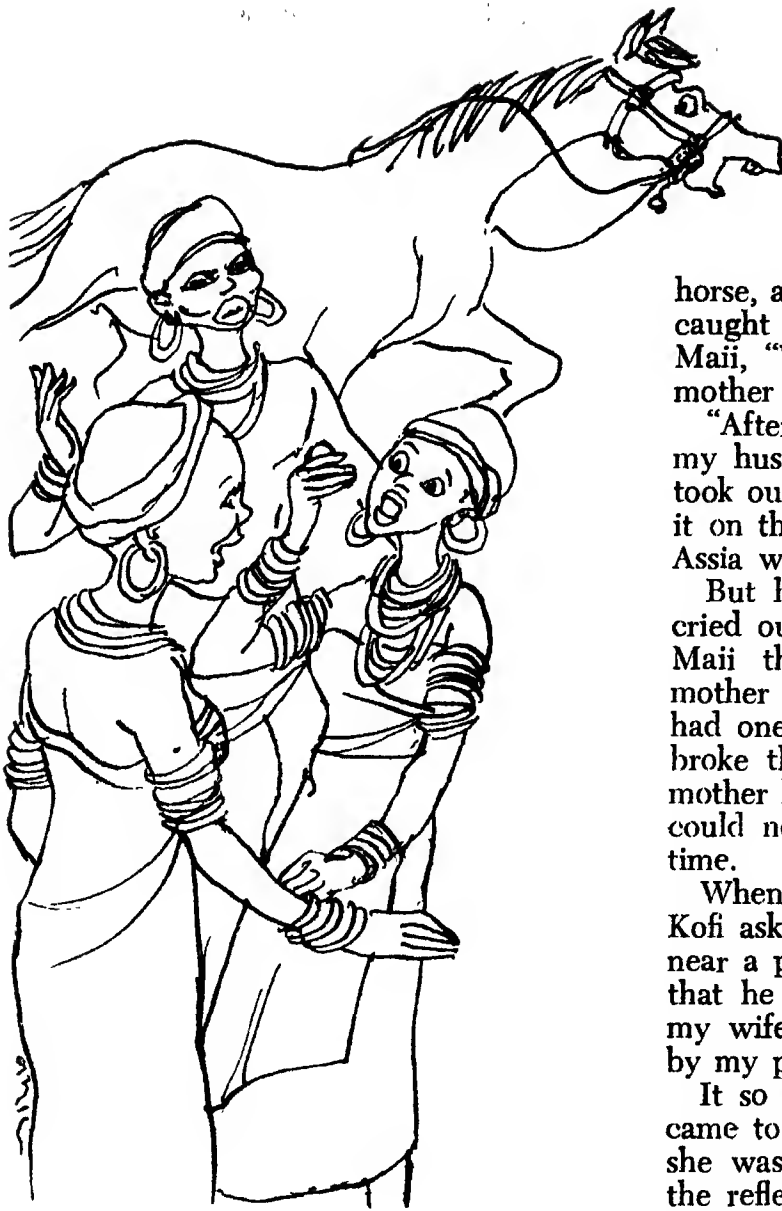
Despite this, Kofi stood with his head bent low, ready for the blows. As the Chief swung his sword in the air, Kofi quickly whispered, "Maii, Maii, Maii." No sooner had he uttered the name than his neck became hard as steel, and the sword broke in two as it struck his neck. The result was the same with the second blow with the other sword.

The Chief was very impressed and said, "I think Maii is destined to be yours, but before you take her, I want one more test to be carried out. Here is a bean which I want you to plant, and if it bears good ripe beans in time for our dinner tonight, then Maii shall be yours."

Kofi knew it was an impossible task and that only Maii could help him. But she was under strict guard, so she could not possibly come and advise him again. Hardly had he thought of her, when the bean began to sprout. He realized that the very thought of Maii had enabled the bean to sprout. So, he softly uttered her name twice more, and the sprout grew into a plant and he could pluck a basketful of ripe beans which were served for the Chief's dinner that night.

The Chief was very impressed by Kofi and he celebrated the wedding of Maii and Kofi with great rejoicing.

But soon after the wedding, the Chief summoned Kofi and said, "In our land, it is customary for the bride to stay in her father's house with her husband." This was a great disappointment to Kofi, for he wanted to take his lovely wife to his own home.



That night Maii told her husband, "There is no such custom as my father professes. He is too fond of me to wish me out of his sight. So, if you desire that we should go to your house, let us run away tonight."

Kofi readily agreed. Maii went to the kitchen and took three of the five eggs lying in a basket. And while it was still dark, they ran away.

In the morning, there was great commotion in the Chief's camp when they found Kofi and Maii missing. People were sent out in search of them. But the Chief's wife guessed exactly where they would be heading. So, she picked up the remaining two eggs from the basket, harnessed her

horse, and charged off after them. She soon caught up with them and demanded of Maii, "Why didn't you get water for your mother this morning? Isn't it your duty?"

"After my marriage, my duty is towards my husband," Maii replied fearlessly. She took out an egg from her pocket and broke it on the ground, so that the earth goddess Assia would let her go.

But her mother also broke an egg and cried out to the goddess not to let her go. Maii then broke another egg, and her mother did the same. Luckily for Maii, she had one more egg with her, and after she broke that also they were set free. Her mother helplessly watched them go, for she could not move from her place for some time.

When Kofi and Maii neared his village, Kofi asked Maii to wait under a palm tree near a pond while he went and announced that he was bringing his bride. "How can my wife not receive a pompous welcome by my people?"

It so happened that an ugly old woman came to fetch water from the pond. When she was filling her pot, she suddenly saw the reflection of a very beautiful face and was overjoyed to see that she looked so lovely. "It is undignified for such a lovely person to carry water," she said and threw the earthen pot on the ground. The pot broke into a hundred pieces and one piece flew and cut her foot. As she bent down to tie a piece of cloth on her bleeding foot, she spotted Maii standing under the palm tree. The old woman said maliciously, "So it was your face that I saw reflected in the pond! Come here, I will comb your hair for you and marry you to my son."

"I will not come," Maii replied, "since I do not want my hair combed, for that will be the end of me. And I do not want to marry your son, for I am already happily married."

But the jealous old woman charged up to her and catching Maii unawares, thrust her comb into her hair. And at that very instant, poor Maii was turned into a lovely little bird twittering and circling the palm tree mournfully.

When Kofi returned with his father and the village folk, there was no sign of Maii. When Kofi saw the horrible old woman, he shouted, "You are not my Maii. Where is she?"

"But I am your Maii," laughed the old woman.

Kofi was hysterical with grief at having lost his beautiful bride. He would have killed himself, but his brother and other village folk forcefully took him home.

The next day Kofi's brother stopped by the same pond to drink water. He suddenly heard a small bird flying and calling sadly, "Kofi, Kofi, Kofi." He couldn't believe his ears and he ran home and told his brother what he had seen and heard.

Kofi, who was sitting as though in a trance jumped up when he heard his brother's tale and begged him to get the bird for him.

So his brother went back to the pond and caught the bird and took it home. On seeing Kofi, the bird twittered joyously and chirping "Kofi, Kofi, Kofi", it perched itself on Kofi's palm. Kofi gently stroked its feathers, and as he did so, he dislodged the comb and it dropped to the ground. And in a flash, Maii stood before him looking even more beautiful than before.

They hugged each other with happiness, and there was rejoicing in the whole village, as the beautiful bride was welcomed in full ceremony. Kofi was the happiest person there, and he wouldn't let Maii move from his side. When the villagers learnt that an old woman had cast a spell and turned her into a bird, all the old women of the village were summoned, and Maii pointed out the wicked one.

With one go, the people chased the woman right out of the village, and she was never to be seen again. And Kofi and his lovely Maii lived happily for a long, long time.

India-Australia Cricket Quiz

1. Who captained Australia in the first Test series with India?
2. In Tests against Australia, only one Indian batsman has had the dubious pleasure of scoring a duck in both innings of a match. Who is he?
3. How many of the following men have captained India against Australia in Test matches? Lala Amarnath, C.K. Nayudu, Polly Umrigar, D.K. Gaekwad, Nari Contractor, Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, Ajit Wadekar, Chandu Borde.
4. Who has the highest individual score in a Test between Australia and India?
5. Bobby Simpson will captain Australia in the coming series. In how many Tests has he led his country against India in the past?
6. The hero of the second Test at Kanpur in December 1959 was Jasu Patel. How many wickets did he take in his famous first innings?
7. What was India's lowest score in Tests against Australia? Who was India's captain in that Test?
8. Which batsmen have scored a century in both innings of an India-Australia Test match?
9. Which Indian bowler has taken 25 or more wickets in a Test series with Australia?
10. Who was the Australian wicket-keeper when India toured Australia in 1947-48?

Rukmini Mukherjee

CHILDREN'S WORLD

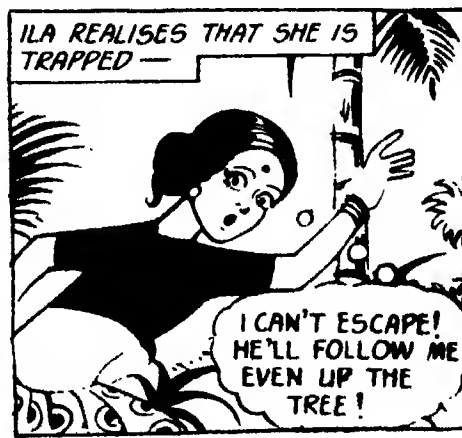
KAPISH

**ANANT PAI
MOHANDAS**

KAPISH AND HIS FRIENDS, ILA AND BUNDILA, ARE PLAYING BESIDE A RIVER —



SUDDENLY THE JUNGLE BECOMES VERY QUIET AND BIRDS RISE UP SCREECHING INTO THE AIR —



HER HEART POUNDING WITH FEAR, SHE
TURNS ASIDE AND RUNS BACK TO THE RIVER—



KAPISH WATCHES ANXIOUSLY FROM THE
TOP OF THE TREE—

POOR ILA! THAT
HORRIBLE PEELU WILL
SURELY CATCH HER
IF I DON'T THINK OF
SOMETHING SOON.



PEELU INDEED SEEMS VERY CONFIDENT
OF CATCHING HIS PREY—

SHE CAN'T SWIM
FAR. SHE'LL GET
TIRED SOON.



AND ALAS FOR ILA THAT IS EXACTLY
WHAT HAPPENS—

I... I'M GETTING
TIRED.



HER STROKES BECOME WEAKER AND
WEAKER—

LET HER STRUGGLE
A LITTLE MORE, THEN
I'LL HOP IN AND
PULL HER OUT.



KAPISH IS FRANTICALLY TRYING
TO THINK OF A PLAN TO SAVE
ILA. JUST THEN HE SEES A
MOVEMENT IN THE BUSHES
FURTHER UP THE RIVER—

THAT
MUST BE
BUNDILA.



BUNDILA HAS STOPPED
RUNNING AND IS CAUTIOUSLY
LOOKING BACK TO SEE
WHAT'S HAPPENING—

I'VE AN IDEA!
BUT I'LL NEED
BUNDILA'S
HELP.



KAPISH RACES THROUGH
THE TREE-TOPS
TOWARDS HIS FRIEND—

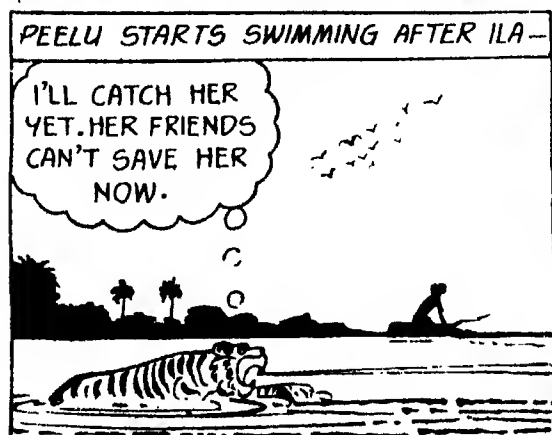
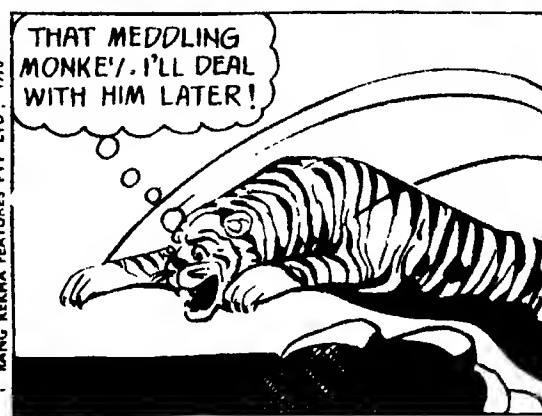
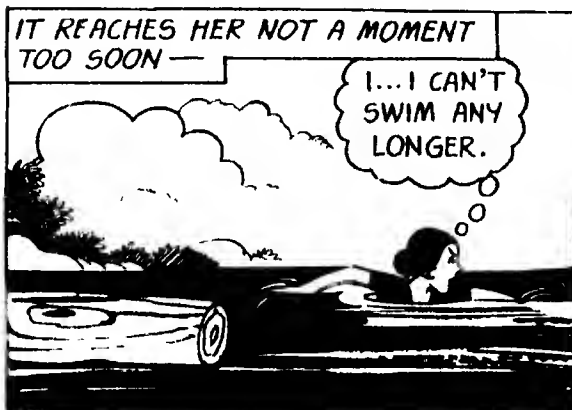
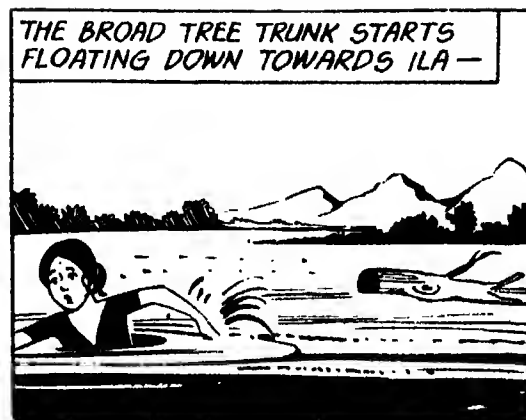
BUNDILA, WE MUST
ACT QUICKLY!
THERE IS NO
TIME TO BE
LOST!



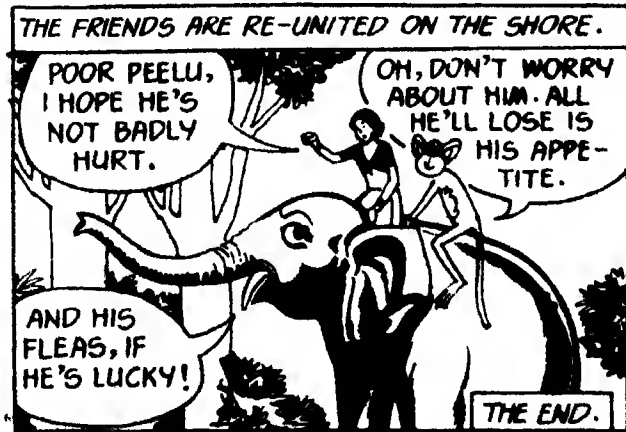
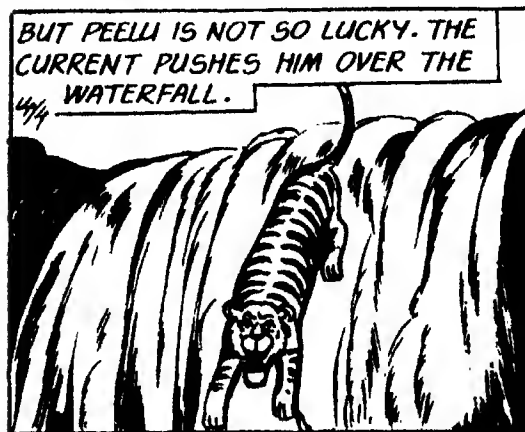
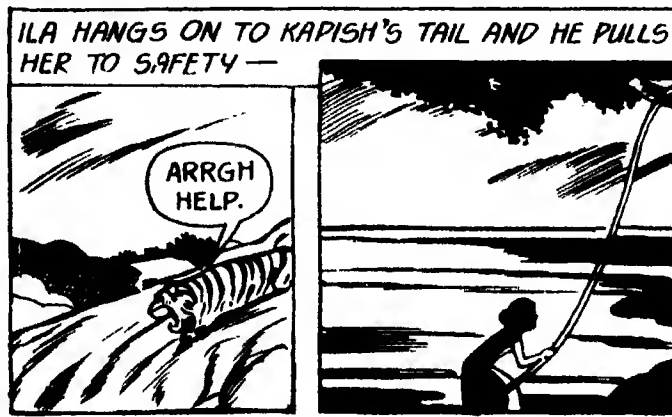
KAPISH CONTINUES—

DO YOU SEE THAT TREE
FALLEN THERE? YOU
MUST PUSH IT INTO
THE RIVER. HURRY!





RANG REKHA FEATURES PVT LTD. 1976



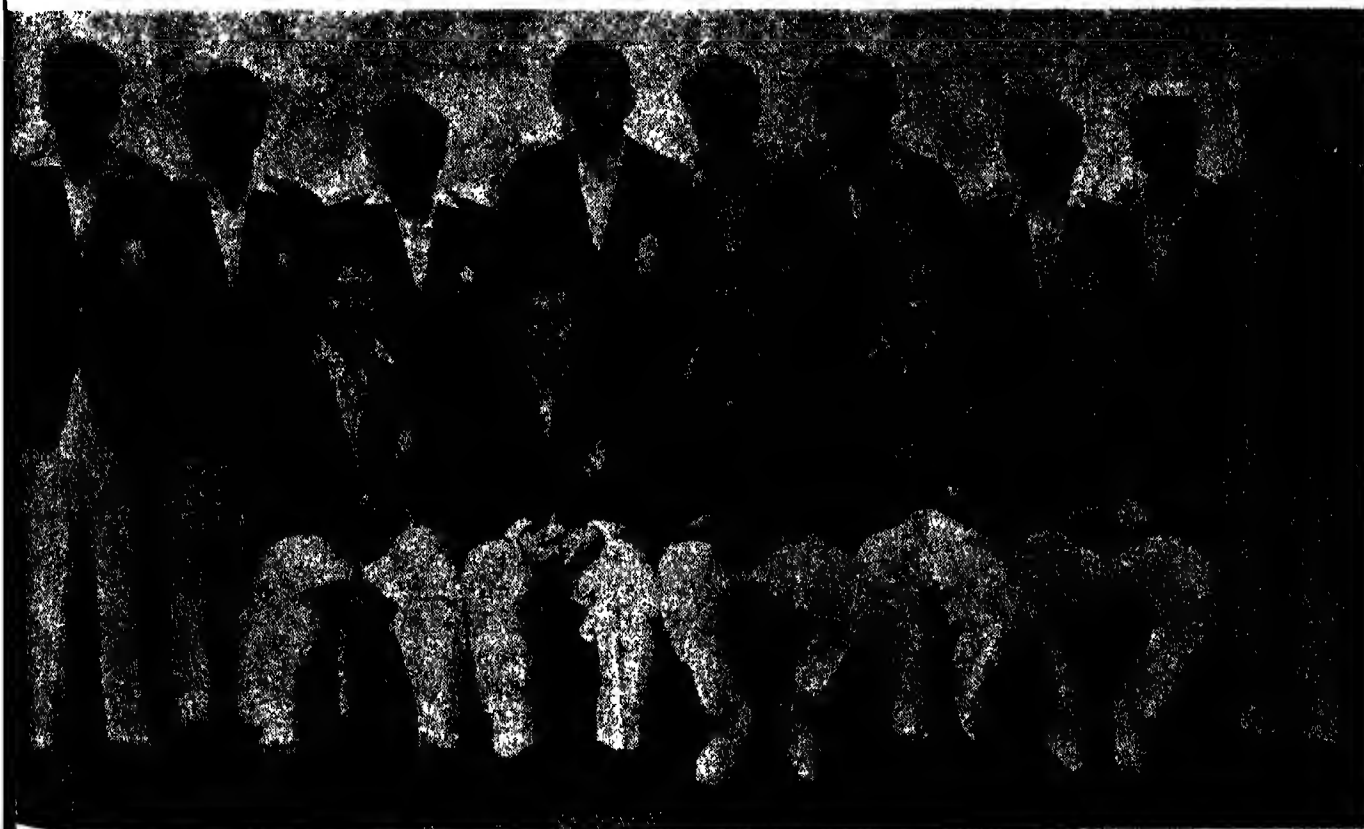
INDIA'S FIRST CRICKET TEST VICTORY

CRICKET encounters between India and England were resumed after a break of five years when the M.C.C. team, led by N.D. Howard, toured India in the winter of 1951-52. Meanwhile, Indian Cricket had come in contact with Australia and the West Indies. The second England team's visit was historic, with India recording her first Test victory and drawing a Test series for the first time. It was a great achievement, even though the vanquished England team was virtually a "Second XI". Without stalwarts like Hutton, Compton, Simpson, Evans, and Bedser, it was hardly worthy of representing England at her best.

The visitors won six of their first class matches, including a Test, drew ten, and

lost seven. Indian batsmen played eight three-figure innings, seven of which were in the Tests and only one (M.R. Rege's 133 runs for Maharashtra) in a first class match. The visitors, on the other hand, notched up ten centuries, two of which were made in the Tests. Indian teams put up five three-figure partnerships, of which four were in the Tests. The tourists had 15 century partnerships, three of them in the Tests.

None of the visiting batsmen completed the 1,000-run mark. J.D. Robertson had the highest aggregate of 906 runs (average 50.33), followed by T.W. Graveney 897 (average 52.76), and A.J. Watkins 837 (average 52.31). In the Tests, however, Watkins



The Indian team which won the fifth Test against England at Madras in 1952 — Seated (left to right): D.G. Phadkar, L. Amarnath, V.S. Hazare (captain), S. Mushtaq Ali, and V. Menked; Standing (left to right): S.G. Shinde, V.L. Manjrekar, P. Roy, Ghulam Ahmed, C.D. Gopinath, P.R. Umrigar, P. Sen, P.G. Jadhav, and R.V. Divecha.

led the batting averages with a total of 451 runs (average 64.42), Graveney coming in second with 363 runs (average 60.50). Among the bowlers, Roy Tattersall had the biggest bag of 40 wickets, but seven of the 11 bowlers tried on the tour had averages of less than 30 runs per wicket. In Test matches, M.J. Hilton, who took 11 wickets, had the best average of 17.00, with Tattersall coming next with a total of 21 wickets (average 28.33). Brian Statham took eight wickets (average 36.62).

For India, the most successful batsman was Vijay Hazare, who topped the batting with a total 347 runs (average 57.83). Hazare scored two centuries, with a top score of 164 not out. Pankaj Roy made an impressive debut with an aggregate of 387 runs (average 55.28). He also had the distinction of making two hundreds, with a top score of 140. It is of interest that Pankaj Roy, who holds the world record score of



Hazare returns to the pavilion after his great innings



J.B. Statham, Lancashire and England fast bowler

413 runs for the first wicket with Vinoo Mankad, also holds the world record for the largest number of "ducks" for a recognised Test batsman. He has been dismissed for a "duck" 14 times in his Test career. In 1952, when India played in England, he had five "ducks" in the series, including four in a row! The other Indian batsman to score centuries was Vijay Merchant, who played in only one innings in the First Test and scored 154 runs.

Among bowlers, Mankad was way ahead of the others with a bag of 34 wickets (average 16.79) in 370.4 overs. Ghulam Ahmed came next with 10 wickets (average 21.00). The only other bowler to claim 10 wickets was S.G. Shinde; who gave away 46.10 runs per wicket.

The first 3 Tests—at New Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta—were drawn. England

drew first blood by winning the fourth Test at Kanpur by eight wickets, to take a 1-0 lead in the series.

The curtain went up on the fifth and final Test in Madras on February 6. The Kanpur defeat caused a panic, and the Indian selectors brought back veteran Amarnath, Divecha, and Gopinath. P.G. Joshi was replaced by P. Sen as wicket-keeper. It was, thus, an altogether 'new' team that took the field.

England won the toss and opened the innings with Lowson and Spooner. Phadkar gave a sensational start to the match, clean bowling Lowson (1) with a ball that swung in late and sharply, and England were one-down for three. Spooner and Graveney then settled down to add 68 runs, before Graveney (39) was cleverly drawn out of his crease by Mankad, and was smartly stumped by Sen. Another useful partnership between Spooner and Robertson added 60 runs for the third wicket, before Spooner (66) was out. Donald Carr deputising for Nigel Howard, contributed a valuable 40 runs, and Watkins (9) played a dogged innings to remain at the wicket for over an hour. England were all out for 266 runs on the morning of the second day. Robertson was the top scorer with 77.

For India, Mankad bowled magnificently to claim eight wickets for 53 runs in 38.5 overs, which is still the best bowling figures for any Indian in Tests against England. Hazare and Phadkar took the remaining two wickets. Sen stumped four batsmen, and was largely responsible for England's downfall.

Mushtaq Ali and Pankaj Roy, who opened the Indian innings, gave a solid start to India, putting on 53 runs before Mushtaq (22) was stumped by Spooner, off Carr. Hazare (20), Mankad (22), and Amarnath (31) batted brightly during their short stay at the wicket, but it was Roy's batting that kept the scoreboard moving. Roy who made 111 runs, was as stylish and commanding in attack, as he was cool and assured in defence. The third day's play was dominated by Umrigar, who remained unbeaten with a hard-hitting 130 runs. With Phadkar, he put on 104 runs for the sixth wicket, and then added 93 runs with Gopinath for



Nigel D. Howard (captain)

the seventh. Hazare declared the innings closed at 457 for nine, half-an-hour before the draw of stumps on the third day.

England, in their second innings, lost both the opening batsmen with only 15 runs on the board. Graveney (25) and Robertson (56), however, put on 53 runs for the third wicket. This was followed by another useful partnership between Robertson and Watkins, which yielded 51 runs for the fourth wicket. With half the side out for 135, England still needed 57 runs to avoid an innings defeat.

Excitement ran high as England struggled against the accurate bowling of Mankad and Ghulam Ahmed. The only batsman, who put up a stiff resistance, was Alan Watkins (48), who was eventually caught and bowled by Mankad with the total at 159. This was Mankad's first wicket in the second innings. When Mankad claimed the next two wickets with the total at 178, visions of an Indian victory sent a thrill round the ground. The match was slowly moving towards its exciting climax.

The date was February 10, 1952—a day that will always be remembered as long as cricket is played in India. A deep silence had descended on the ground, but there was tension in the air as the last England pair, Statham and Tattersall, were desperately trying to avoid an innings defeat. The clock in the pavilion of the Chepauk ground was striking 3 o'clock when Statham lifted Mankad to long on. All eyes were on C.D. Gopinath, the Madras player and the 'baby' of the Indian team, fielding in the deep. Gopinath had positioned himself for the catch, but would he take it? Gopinath made no mistake and the ball was safe in his hands, and it was all over. Statham was out, and India had won by the handsome margin of an innings and eight runs, with more than a day to spare. The pent-up emotions burst into a crescendo of cheering to signal India's first ever victory in a Test match.

The long journey that had begun at

Lord's just over twenty years earlier, when India entered the Test arena had been fulfilled at Madras. India had not only won a Test, but had managed to square the five-match Test series. The architects of India's historic win were Mankad, who had a match analysis of 12 wickets for 108 runs, and Ghulam Ahmed, who took four wickets in England's second innings for 77 runs.

It was only fit and proper that the signal honour of leading India to her first Test victory should have fallen on Vijay Hazare. This modest genius had not only served the country well, but was the outstanding post-War cricketer to play for India. Hazare, whose modesty is his greatest asset, was able to get wonderful support from every member of the team. Under his leadership, everyone played for the team and eventually proved that Indians could subordinate their individual interests for the good of all.

Saradindu Sanyal

CLARRIE GRIMMETT

—“The Wily Old Fox”—

PLAYING in a match at Sydney, Clarrie Grimmett bowled Tommy Andrews round his legs with a huge leg-break. As Andrews passed the incoming batsman Alan Kippax at the gate, he indicated with a gesture just how much the ball had turned. From the middle, Clarrie noted it and sent in a concealed straight ball which surprised the stylish Alan and laid low the middle stump first ball. This was how Grimmett's bowling always was: deft, adroit, and incisive, though, of course, he was not blessed with instantaneous success at all times. More often, he was busy tirelessly weaving subtle nets round the batsmen to minimise the chances of their getting away, and succeeded to the extent of landing as many as 216 Test victims in his net, the best tally for any bowler, when he retired from the game.

Clarence Victor Grimmett was born in New Zealand on Xmas Day 1892, a wonderful Christmas gift for cricket! He remained there for 21 years when, frustrated by lack of opportunities in a country still not enjoying Test status, he packed his bags and decided to take his spinning hand to neighbouring Australia. For 10 years he was kicked from door to door in the country of his adoption; in that time, he was rejected first by New South Wales and then by Victoria, and it was not until 1923-24, when he went to South Australia, that he became a regular choice in the State team.

A lesser heart would have broken down long before on the face of such heart-breaking tribulations, but Grimmett persisted with all his might. He laid out a turf wicket in the backyard of his home and there, hour after hour, he wheeled his arm

over, intent on complete mastery over the intricacies of spin and flight. As a boy, he had learnt 'the googly' from a magazine article and now he set about perfecting it. In due course, he invented 'the flipper', a ball more difficult to detect than the googly, and which hurried through at a brisk pace from the pitch. He can thus be termed the authentic inventor of this ball, which he later taught Dooland, and the mystery of which Dooland in his turn disclosed to Richie Benaud. Grimmett even trained his pet dog, a fox-terrier, to retrieve balls in his backyard, and it was this steely self-discipline and burning ambition to come out on top that finally brought him the ultimate recognition and won him a place in the fifth Test against England in 1924-25, a Test that Australia had to win to accomplish an outright victory in the series.

He was still so obscure a figure that THE TIMES (London), referring to his selection, labelled him "the South Australian left-handed bowler"; five days later, when the Test ended, he had become the toast of all Australia! In his third over, he clean bowled Frank Woolley, accounted for Hearne in his sixth, and snared Whysall in his ninth over. England were 167 all out, Clarrie accounting for 5 wickets at 45. In the second innings, he had Hobbs, Sandham, and Hendren for only 9 runs at one stage and finished with 6 for 37, a double feat which brought an easy victory for Australia by 307 runs.

Grimmett first visited England in 1926, when he headed the Test bowling averages by capturing 13 of the 39 English wickets to fall in the series at 31.84. In the return series in 1928-29, he went through a lot of work, sending down 3,186 balls, giving away 1,024 runs for 23 wickets—the highest on the Australian side. The 1930 tour to England was one long triumph for Grimmett. In the Tests, he created a record for most wickets with 29 at 31.89 each, ten of which came in the first Test; on the tour, he took 144 wickets at 16.85. Against Yorkshire, he took all ten wickets in an innings for 37 runs, the last 7 for only 16, while in the Nottingham Test, he tricked out Ham-

mond, Woolley and Hendren—three of the greatest batsmen England has ever produced—within the space of a few minutes on a perfect wicket.

The figures above will leave no one in doubt about the debt which Australia owed to Grimmett over these years; no Australian side could be imagined without him. Till the advent of Bill O'Reilly, Grimmett was the sole threat to comers from all over the world, and cricketers from both West Indies and South Africa found him almost unplayable. Against the former, he took 33 Test wickets at 17.96 in 1930-31, while against the West Indians a year later, he captured the same number, this time for 16.87.

It was on the 1934 tour to England that Grimmett was joined by O'Reilly to form one of the most devastating spin attack of all times. For English batsmen now there was to be no respite from either end. Their styles contrasted widely, but there was little to choose between them in effectivity. Grimmett took 25 wickets at 26.72 as against O'Reilly's 28 at 24.92—the spin twins accounting for 53 of the 71 wickets to fall during the series.

The best was still to come, however, and this time Grimmett had the better breaks and took the most wickets. The South Africans were all at sea against the spin, flight, and cunning of this diminutive magician. Clarrie, on that 1935-36 tour, was irresistible and tied the batsmen into knots with the wizardry of his superbly controlled leg-spin and googly bowling. He was moderately successful in the first two Tests, but by the time the third big encounter came around, he had sized up his opponents with uncanny perception. In the third Test, he took 5-32 and 5-56, with 7-40 and 3-70 in the fourth, while in the fifth, he captured 14 wickets 6-73 and 7-100. In the five Tests, Grimmett took a record 44 wickets at only 14.59. His age exactly corresponded with his tally of wickets in the series.

After this spate of success, strange to say, Grimmett never again played Test cricket.

The selectors dropped him like a hot brick and gave lesser bowlers a turn, though he was still by far the most successful bowler in Shield cricket. Wally Hammond, England's cricket captain, noting his absence from the 1938 squad to England, remarked: "I have often wondered why they left Grimmett behind. What a world of difference his googlies might have made!"

In just 37 Test matches, Grimmett took the then unparalleled number of 216 wickets (106 v. England, 77 v. S. Africa, 33 v. W. Indies) at an average of 24.21, reaching the 100-wicket mark in only his 17th Test. His effectivity in all climes and conditions and his apparent indispensability to Australia can be readily gauged from the fact that in 8 of his 10 Test rubbers, he either

took most wickets or headed the averages. To this day, he holds the Sheffield Shield record for most wickets, and his 239 first class matches brought him a bag of 1,402 wickets at 22.18.

Grimmett was a 'little' man—5'7" tall and weighing around 10 stone—but the work he went through would have taxed the strength and stamina of a giant. His taciturnity, his over-all demeanour and, finally, the mystery in which his bowling was always shrouded brought him such nicknames as "the gnome," "the fox," and "Scarlet," a contraction of Scarlet Pimpernel. He was terribly self-conscious of his baldness and, at the fag end of his career, perfected a method of peeling his sweater over his head without removing the cap!

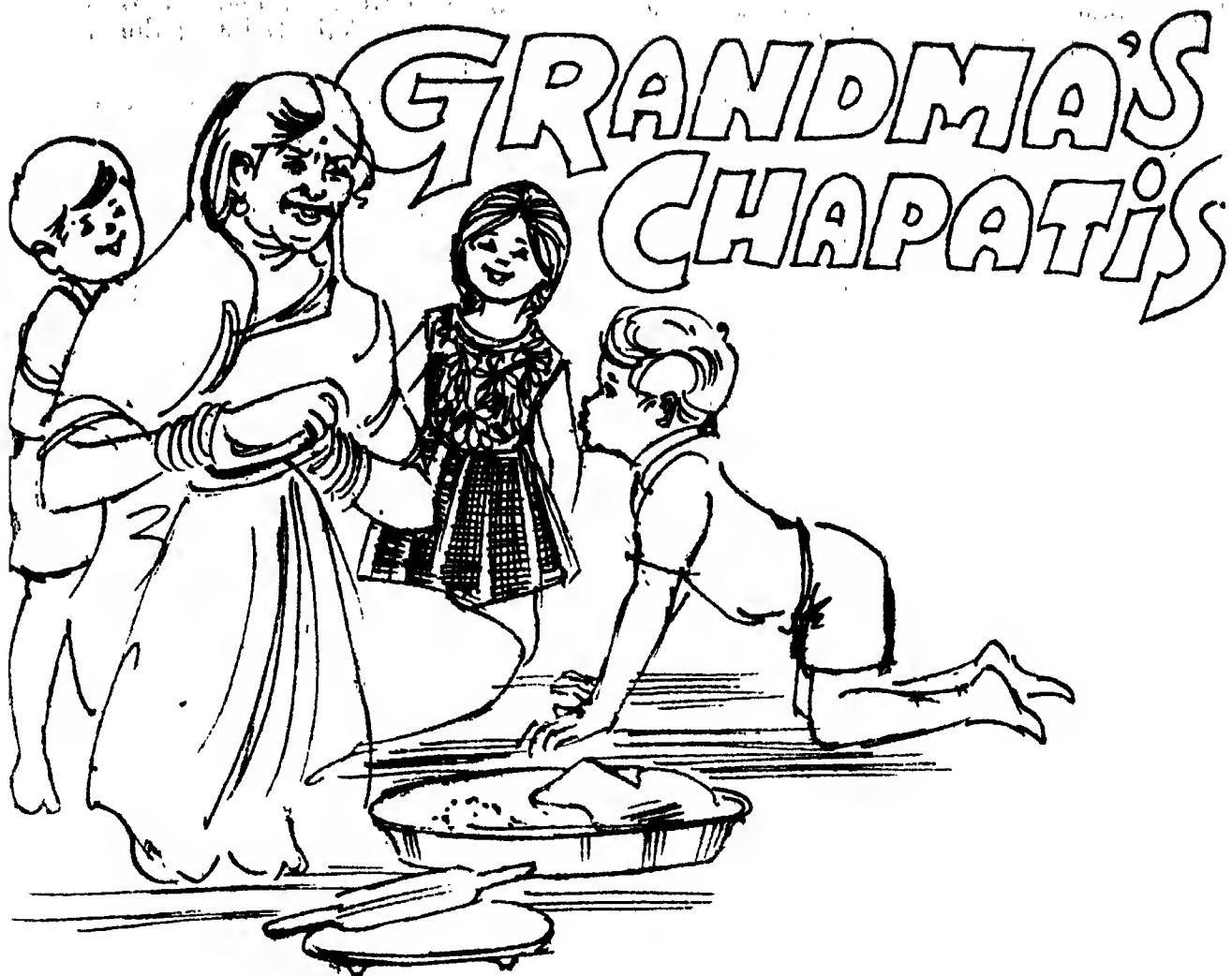
He was also a competent batsman with a stylish Test fifty to his credit; his fielding was described by a writer as reminding him of a cat walking on a wet pavement. It is as a deceptive spin bowler, however, that Grimmett's claim to immortality chiefly rests. He had a short skippy run of about 6 yards and bowled with a round arm-action. Accuracy of length was his watchword. Ray Robinson, in comparing Mailey and Grimmett, wrote that "Mailey bowled like a millionaire, Grimmett like a miser." "There has never been a cleverer leg-break bowler than Grimmett," wrote Neville Cardus, and the art, trickery, dedication and brains, which went into his bowling, was always fascinating to watch.

Leg-spin and googly bowling were Clarrie Grimmett's life-long obsession, and the heights he scaled in this domain remain unconquered to this day. As a little boy, he had experimented with the ball; as an old soldier of 75, he was still bowling in his backyard, probing the intricacies of spin bowling.



Clarrie Grimmett

Mahiyar D. Morawalla



KHOKA, Moni and Raja were watching Grandma make chapatis. First, Grandma took a small round of dough, then she patted it flat, dusted some loose flour on it, and then laid it on the board to roll. How quickly she did it, and how perfectly round the chapatis were!

"Like the moon," said Khoka.

"The moon is not always round," said Moni, who was a clever girl. "Sometimes, there is no moon at all."

"When the moon is round and full, then the chapatis look like the moon," said Raja. "On full moon days."

"What happens on other days, then?" asked Moni.

Khoka started crying. "Then, when there is no moon, there are no chapatis. How will we have chapatis when there is no moon?"

"You are very silly," said Moni, the clever girl. "When there is no moon, the chapatis

don't look like the moon. Then, they look like, they look like. . . ."

"Oh, yes, they look like the sun," said Khoka, drying his tears. "And the sun comes every day, so there will always be chapatis."

"Not on rainy days," said Moni, who was really a clever girl. "What happens on rainy days?"

"You are horrid, you are horrid!" screamed Khoka. "You make the rain come, so that the chapatis can't look like the sun."

"Now, now, children," said Thamma, "don't fight."

"But, Thamma," cried Khoka, Moni, and Raja, all together.

"The sun doesn't come on rainy days," said Moni.

"What happens to the chapatis, Thamma?" asked Khoka.

"I am hungry," said Raja.

Thamma said nothing. She took out three

bits of dough from the bowl, and gave one each to Raja, Moni, and Khoka.

"You make chapatis," she told them. "Make them with your palms, like this." She put some dough between her palms and pressed it and flattened it, so that it became a small round chapati.

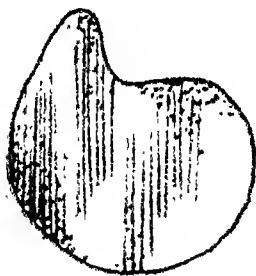
"I can do that easily," said Moni, who was a clever girl.

"I can make it rounder than you," boasted Khoka. "I can make it a hundred times rounder."

Only Raja said nothing. He had already started patting the dough with his palms.

For some time, there was silence as Moni, Raja, and Khoka tried to make round chapatis with their palms.

"I have finished, I have finished!" cried out Khoka. "Look!" And he showed them a chapati that looked like this:

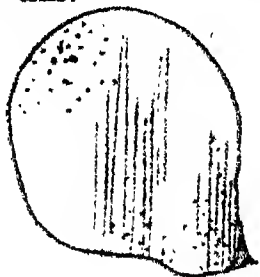


"That's not round," said Moni. "Look at mine." Her chapati was like this:



"Ha," said Khoka. "Mine is much rounder, a thousand times rounder."

"I haven't made mine round at all," said Raja. "I have made a chapati leaf." His looked like this:



"I'll make a tree, I'll make a tree!" said Khoka and he rolled his bit of dough into a tree trunk.

"I'll make a bird," said Moni. "A parrot."

"Then it can sit on my tree," said Khoka.

Raja said nothing. He was busy shaping the dough into something mysterious.

Khoka made his chapati tree and Moni made the chapati parrot. She tried to put the parrot on the tree, but it kept falling off.

"It won't sit," she said angrily. "It's a stupid parrot." And she threw it down and sat back sulking.

"Never mind," said Khoka. "You make it a dog."

"I don't want to make it a dog," said Moni still angry. "I want it to be a parrot, a clever parrot who can sit on a tree."

"Your parrot is stupid, your parrot is stupid!" sang Khoka.

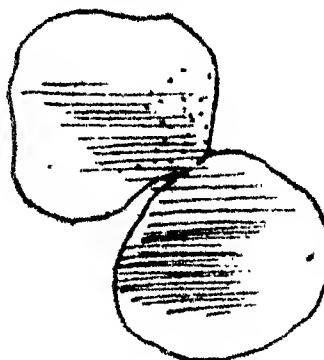
"No, my parrot is clever," yelled Moni. "It's your tree that is stupid."

"How can trees be stupid? They have no heads," said Khoka.

"Then the leaves are stupid," answered Moni. "The leaves of your tree are stupid, stupid, stupid."

"No, no, no, no, a hundred times more stupid is your parrot," screamed Khoka.

But just as Moni, the clever girl, and Khoka were about to have a big fight, Raja said, "Look what I have done." And they looked, and what did they see? Raja, with the bit of chapati dough, had made this:



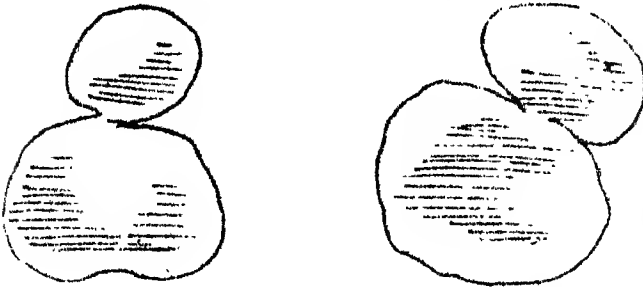
"This is chapati Raja," said Raja proudly.

"Oh, I'll make a chapati Khoka," said Khoka and quickly rolled his tree into two small balls.

"And I must make a chapati Moni," said Moni.

"Dinner is ready," said Grandma.

"One minute, one minute," said Khoka and Moni. And in a minute, they had made two:



"Now, we are all ready," said Khoka, "chapati Khoka and real Khoka, chapati Moni and real Moni, chapati Raja and real Raja."

"What about the chapati moon and the chapati sun?" asked Grandma.

"Oh, I am the sky," said Khoka. "I am going to eat up the chapati moon."

"And I am the rain," said Moni. "I will eat up the chapati sun."

Only Raja said nothing. He had already finished eating two chapati moons, and he was now starting on the chapati sun.

Poile

HOW and WHY

Aparna Krishnan, New Delhi, asks :

What is day dreaming? When we have dreams, is our mind awake?

Daydreaming is what you mean perhaps when you say—'dreaming with the mind awake'. Actually, the ordinary dreams that we get at night are also dreams with the mind awake, but with the body fully asleep. Daydreaming is normal and, I'm sure, it can be very pleasant if done in moderation. (It is a slight waste of time, though!) Nonetheless, it is important that dreams are not confused with reality. When this happens to an occasional person, his dreams are called illusory or hallucinatory experiences, and such a person, believing that his dreams actually happened, is totally deluded.

When a person daydreams, the events happening in his dreams are either a replay of things in the past (when he thinks longingly of those days gone by), or they are pushed into the future (when he fancies the sort of things that he might like to happen to him). There are many types of daydreamers. For example, the conquering hero daydreamer who cannot bear the sting of real life and its failures. He dreams of fantastic situations where he alone is called upon to rescue someone and is able to and, therefore, is glorified as a big, big hero. Most children (and some adults) indulge in this kind of day dreaming. I'm sure it is quite harmless—within limits! One comes

out feeling good and, with one's confidence bolstered, is for a while at least less of a crybaby!

Another kind of daydreamer is the 'good old days' yearner. Such dreamers are mainly adults who refuse to face the changing present and adjust themselves to it. They imagine (and it might be true, too!) that what was in their youth was more wonderful and secure and their yearning for those lost days makes them more and more miserable. This kind of daydreaming is destructive, serves no positive cause, and only makes you feel unhappy.

Then there is the 'suffering hero' daydreamer, who enacts a mental drama in which he himself is wronged and is in great agony—perhaps even dying. His tormentors, realising their wickedness, are on their knees begging forgiveness and expressing heartfelt remorse! The suffering hero feels very, very grateful and satisfied!

The 'debating hero' daydreamer is often at war with the world and with himself, all the time preparing to face life and yet all the time feeling at a loss to do so.

So, you see, many are the types of daydreamers and many are the ways of deception. All of us daydream to a greater or a lesser extent. Often, it is a harmless escape from reality, providing momentary gratification or filling you with a sense of physical well being and security.

Meera Ramakrishnan

UNCLE MOHAN'S UMBRELLA ACTS!

"UNCLE MOHAN," I said rather excitedly, after hearing about his wonderful adventures, "how is it that we never come across such interesting people, as you do?"

"You do, Gita, you do," answered my Uncle Mohan, "you have only to look closely at them. Everywhere in the world there are nice, interesting people."

I then tried to think of the people I knew. Well, there was Vijay Khanna, who was very fat. That certainly didn't make him very interesting! Then there was Baby Menon, who wore specs. That didn't make her very interesting either. I also knew Malika Sen, who was neither fat, nor wore specs. I neither liked her nor disliked her. But she hardly struck me as being a very interesting person!

"You see, that is not the right attitude," said Uncle Mohan. "How will you ever know a person, if you never speak to him or her? Come, let's go out and see how many interesting people there are, even in your own neighbourhood! Let's take the little Japanese umbrella with us," he added with a twinkle in his eyes.

My Uncle closed his yellow suitcase and we ran down the stairs. "Bye!" we called to my mother, who was in the kitchen busy with her jam jars. She looked at us and then at the umbrella and frowned.

The street was nearly empty, except for one or two hawkers. And then we saw a girl walking down the street, alone. It was none other than Malika Sen.

"Look, there comes my neighbour, Malika Sen," I told my Uncle. "Now you can see for yourself. Does she look interesting?"

Malika Sen came closer. As she reached us, she smiled very politely, not taking her eyes off the umbrella in my hand.

"Hello," she greeted us. "This is the most beautiful umbrella I have ever seen."

"Hello," replied Uncle Mohan. "I am glad you like it. You must be Malika Sen. Gita has told me about you."

"Oh!" said Malika Sen and blushed. "Have you?" she asked, turning to me.

"Yes," I said, and smiled uneasily.

Suddenly Malika Sen's eyes shone brightly. "I too have a similar umbrella," she cried, "but not as beautiful as yours. I think you will like it. May I show it to you?"

"Of course," Uncle Mohan answered for me, "that would be very interesting, won't it, Gita?" He looked at me. This time it was my turn to blush. "Yes," I said, "of course."

"I also have some Japanese stamps," continued Malika Sen. "If you collect stamps, you're welcome to have the duplicates."

"So kind of you," replied Uncle Mohan, "I do not collect stamps. I think Ramu does."

"Yes," cried Ramu enthusiastically, "I do. We can exchange some, if you like."

"Okay," agreed Malika Sen, who was neither fat nor wore specs, but possessed a Japanese umbrella and a stamp collection larger than Ramu's.

The umbrella was not as beautiful as the one my Uncle had brought, but we liked it all the same.

"Come along with us," invited my Uncle Mohan, "we're going for a walk."

"May I?" said Malika Sen, looking at me.

"Please, come," I replied, and we went down the street together.

Everyone we met looked at us and our umbrellas with a strange smile. But when they met my Uncle's friendly eyes, they murmured "Nice umbrellas" and moved on.

"Isn't it a lovely thing to walk under a Japanese umbrella in Indian sunshine?" remarked Uncle Mohan with a smile.

We nodded in agreement.

"I had never dared to use my umbrella before," confessed Malika Sen. "It was so nice of you to have asked me to come along."

She was right. It was good to walk with her. I should have made friends with her much earlier.

Suddenly I had a strange feeling that we were being followed. I looked around and saw two young women behind us. They were whispering to each other and staring at our umbrellas.

"We are being followed," I muttered.

"Being followed? By whom?" Malika asked.

"By two tall women," I said. "Just turn round and see for yourself."

Malika Sen held on to the handle of her beautiful Japanese umbrella and swung her head around. "Yes!" she said with a small cry. "They're following us."

"Who?" asked Ramu now.

"The two women."

Uncle Mohan turned round just a little bit and glanced at the two women behind us. They were still whispering to each other and all the while staring at our Japanese umbrellas!

"Why do you want to run away from two young Indian women?" laughed my Uncle Mohan. "Let us find out what they want."

We stopped and turned round to face them. But their eyes dropped as they approached us slowly and they did not speak



"But why?" I asked, a little worried.

"I don't know," whispered Malika Sen fearfully.

"Come," I suggested "let us cross over to the other side of the street."

We stepped off the pavement and were about to cross the street, when Uncle Mohan called us back, "Hey, you young ladies, where are you going?"

"Uncle," I whispered, "don't look back. We're being followed."

"By whom?" asked Uncle Mohan, his eyes sparkling mischievously, by the FBI?"

I did not know what he meant by FBI, so I just said, "No. And don't look around. They are still behind us."

a word or look up as they passed us by.

"Come, let's go home," decided my Uncle Mohan.

So we turned back and followed him, still puzzling over the strange behaviour of the two young women.

I still felt uneasy! I had to turn round once more—and gasped! The two women were again behind us!

"Uncle Mohan," I cried, "they are following us again."

"All right," said Uncle, "now we will ask them why."

We stopped intentionally to look at some sunflowers hanging over a garden fence.

Slowly, the two women walked towards us, holding each other's hands, as if nervous of something.

When they reached us, Uncle Mohan bowed and greeted, "Good afternoon."

The two women blushed and looked at each other uneasily.

"Is there anything we can do for you?" asked my Uncle Mohan.

The women blushed even more and pulled the ends of their saris protectingly over their shoulders.

"Excuse us," whispered one of them with large brown eyes bashfully, "we saw your umbrellas and thought, well we thought of asking you, whether you could lend them to us just for three nights?"

"For three nights?" asked my Uncle Mohan and laughed softly and amused. "My dear young ladies, what do you want to do with Japanese sun umbrellas for three nights?"

The two women blushed again. "Oh!" they cried, "please do not get us wrong! We are acting for the Young Theatre Action Group. Tomorrow we are staging a new play called 'Good-bye, Suki-Suki.' My friend and I act as two geishas. Well, if you... if you would be so kind as to let us have these wonderful umbrellas or at least one of them—it would lend so much more charm to the play."

"How interesting," my Uncle Mohan said,

Malika Sen cried, "You can have mine." She immediately closed her umbrella and was ready to hand it over to them.

"You can have both of them," agreed Uncle Mohan warmly.

The two young women smiled gratefully. "It is very kind of you," they said. "You must come and see our show. Please accept these invitation cards and be our guests on the opening day. We would be so happy if you would come. We are living just round the corner. We will definitely return the umbrellas after the last performance. I can't say how thankful we are."

"It is our pleasure," said Uncle Mohan. "We are always happy when we are able to help someone, aren't we?" And he turned to us.

"Yes, yes," said Malika Sen, "we are, we are!"

"How wonderful," sighed Malika Sen as we walked home. "I have never been to a play! Will you take us, Uncle Mohan?"

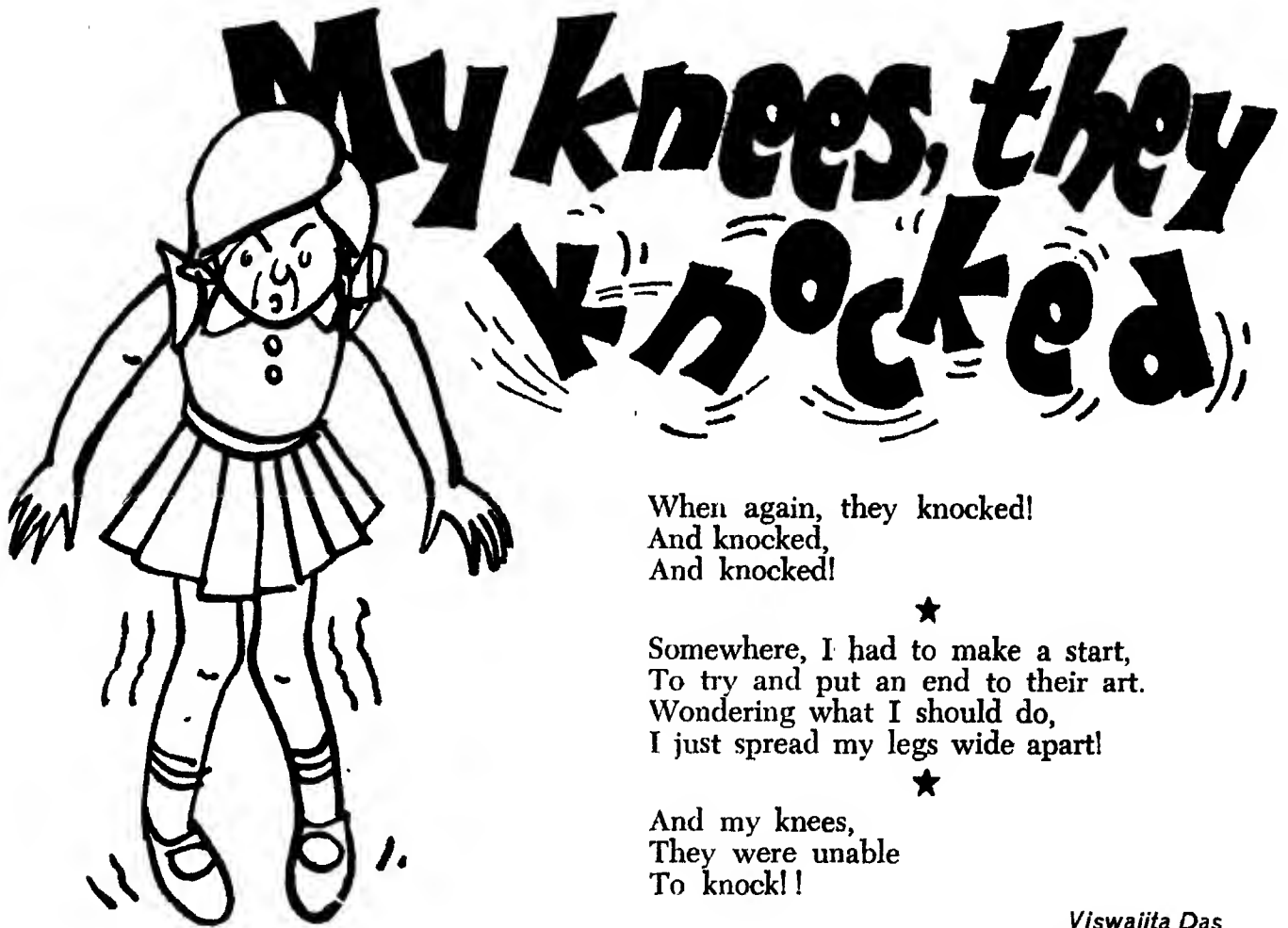
"Of course," promised Uncle Mohan. "I don't want to miss seeing my umbrella acting in a play!"

The umbrellas gave a superb performance in 'Good-bye, Suki-Suki.' The play was very nice, but so sad. Malika Sen and I could not help weeping when one of the geishas died during the last act. She died very gracefully and that, too, with Uncle Mohan's umbrella in her hand. Even Uncle said that the play would never have been such a great success without the two umbrellas!

After the play, we were allowed to go backstage. We met all the actors and actresses in their beautiful costumes and shook hands with all of them.

It was then that I realised that my Uncle Mohan was right! You just have to look around to find how interesting people are and how wonderful this world really is.

Sigrun Srivastava



When again, they knocked!
And knocked,
And knocked!



Somewhere, I had to make a start,
To try and put an end to their art.
Wondering what I should do,
I just spread my legs wide apart!



And my knees,
They were unable
To knock!!

Viswajita Das

It happened most unexpectedly,
Bang! in the middle of assembly.
The Lord's Prayer had been said,
And we were all praying silently—



When my knees, they knocked!



At first, all I could do was stare,
Then the stare turned into a glare.
With my eyes fixed on my knees, I said:
'Knock once again, if you dare!'



And my knees, they knocked!



I was totally astounded,
I was quite, quite dumfounded.
For, when I looked down at my knees,
They looked innocently brown and rounded.



The Khattanga Purana

MAHARAJA KRISHNA CHANDRA was in a bad mood. He refused to smile. He refused to listen to jokes. He refused to be entertained at all. The court was under a shadow because no one dared to smile while the king was in such a mood. It affected everyone. But it affected Gopal the jester most of all. Everyone blamed him for not being able to drive away the king's blues.

"But what can I do if he does not listen to my jokes?" protested poor Gopal. "I know he is worrying about something, but he has not told me what it is."

"Fibber!" said a rival jester. "The Maharaja always tells you his troubles. You've helped him often enough, if rumours are to be believed. I suppose he is annoyed because even you can't help him this time."

"That is not so," said Gopal. "I tell you he has not told me anything about his problem. Had he done so, I could have helped him. I know I could."

Aju, the rival jester, scoffed at Gopal's words. "The trouble with you, Gopal, is that you think you can do everything, just because the Maharaja tends to make a favourite of you. You're supposed to be a jester and you can't even make him smile."

"Well...I..." began Gopal.

"I think you ought to give up being a jester and return to your traditional occupation of a barber," said another.

"Yes," said yet another, "you may not be any use as a jester, but you might make a wonderful barber—yet!"

There were guffaws and titters at the remark, while Gopal left the place red in the face. But he was determined to bring the king back to his former jovial mood. And in the bargain, he would reassert his position in the court. After all, there was nothing or little that Gopal couldn't do. He would prove it yet again!

The very next day, Gopal sought a private interview with the Maharaja. But a surprise was awaiting him. The Maharaja refused

to see him! Gopal was nonplussed. Such a thing had never happened before. Not to him. "Did you tell his majesty that Gopal is here to see him?" he asked incredulously.

"Of course, I did," said the Royal guard in a cross voice, "but his majesty asked me to tell you that at present he is in no mood for jests. If ever he wants to see you again, he will send for you."

"Well I never!" said Gopal to himself as he made for the gate. "If this doesn't beat all!"

If the king refused to confide in him, there was precious little that Gopal could do. But he thought and thought about the problem. Surely, it must be the Nawab again! Really, he was the most whimsical ruler anyone could think of. First, he wanted the measurements of the universe; then he demanded a second 'Mahabharata' to be written on him. Heaven alone knew what he was after this time. Or, thought Gopal, it might not be the Nawab at all.

Gopal sat in his newly built 'drawing room', hookah in hand, while he tried to think of anything unusual that had happened in the last few months. So far as he could remember, Maharaja Krishna Chandra had been distant and aloof for quite some months now. He had neither rewarded nor punished anyone for ages. Now, that was unusual, if you like. The Maharaja—though his moods varied like the weather—was a warm person. He was impulsive, too. He rewarded people generously and punished them severely if they displeased him. How was it that he had not done either?

Gopal decided to look up Aban pundit, the king's chief astrologer. The king had great faith in him. Perhaps he had made some inauspicious predictions, putting the king in his present black mood. But Aban pundit always had remedies. He would have suggested a big 'yajna' and be done with it. Gopal stopped short and scratched his head. Now, where WAS Aban pundia? He had

not been coming to the court for quite some days now. Perhaps he was out of town. Anyway, there were other astrologers. Plenty of them. The king consulted them off and on. All of them. Perhaps they, too, might know of this impending calamity.

Then a thought struck him. Gopal gave a low whistle and sat upright. He had not seen any astrologer for days. No, not a single one. They did not come to the court. They were not seen in the market place. They were not seen in the palace either. Now, what had happened to all the astrologers? And the astronomers? They were not visible either! And yet—it was a well-known fact that the Maharaja consulted them at every step. He took their advice about everything. How was the king managing things in their absence? Or did he keep them locked up in his palace? No, that was absurd. They were always there at the king's beck and call. Locking them up would be foolish and totally unnecessary. Gopal decided that if he could only solve the mystery of the missing astrologers, he might find a solution to his problem. He visited their houses, one by one, only to be told at each one of them that the pundit concerned had been "sent on an urgent mission" by the king.

Gopal decided to see the king unannounced, so as not to give him any chance of a refusal. "Sire," he said bursting into the king's private chambers, the next morning, "where have you sent all our pundits? We need them for ever so many things. Isn't it time they came back?"

"Really, Gopal," said the king, "you take my breath away. Who told you, you may come into my room?"

"No one. The guard was looking the other way," said Gopal, brushing aside the question. "Sire, where are our astrologers? Don't you want them back? We miss them."

"You're telling me!" said the king. "I need them far more than anyone else!"

"Then, why have you sent them packing?" said Gopal in surprise. "They could not have all left unless you wanted them to."

"There was no 'wanting', I assure you," said the king bitterly. "I had no choice."

"No choice!" said Gopal. "A king having no choice! Oh dear! Has the Nawab sent for

them, then? Don't tell me they are all with him!"

"They are," said the king, "and for all I know, they are likely to remain there till Doomsday."

"But why?" asked Gopal in a puzzled voice. "The Nawab has no dearth of astrologers! Why has he picked upon ours?"

"That was my folly, I presume," said the king looking more depressed than ever, "for I had once told him that my pundits were miraculous at making calculations. I suppose that is why he sent for them all."

"Yes, but what happened?" asked Gopal curiously. "Were they not able to do the Nawab's calculations?"

"Apparently not," said the king in a gloomy voice, "and the Nawab is very angry at their inability. He feels that I have bluffed him and cheated him. So, he has locked them up and refuses to release them."

"That's funny," said Gopal. "I wonder what calculations he asked for."

"That's beside the point," said the king in a cross voice. "Whatever the Nawab's calculations might be, my pundits were quite good enough for me. I can't tell you how helpless I feel without them!"

"Supposing I were to have them all released?" said Gopal.

"I can see you doing it," said the king in a sarcastic voice. "I suppose you'll just go and command the Nawab to release them and he'll obey you on bended knees!"

"Never mind how I do it," said Gopal. "You'll be happy to have them back, won't you?"

"I should just think so!" said the king, "but you can't do it, Gopal. So you need not try."

"Have faith in me, Sire," said Gopal, "I shall not let you down. Just send word to the Nawab that a great pundit—an authority on the Khattanga Purana—will be seeing him shortly."

"What Purana did you say?" asked the king in a puzzled voice.

"The Khattanga Purana," said Gopal with a straight face.

"But what IS it? I have not heard of any

purana with such a weird name! If it is one of your jokes, it's not at all funny, let me tell you.

"It is no joke, your majesty," said Gopal, "just send me to Murshidabad, to the Nawab. I shall do the rest."

Maharaja Krishna Chandra had no faith in Gopal's so-called crazy purana. But Gopal had helped him so often in the past. It might not be a bad idea to give him a trial. If he landed up in the Nawab's prison along with the other pundits—well, that was his own look-out. Going there was his own idea, and not the king's. Thus convinced, the king decided to let Gopal go.

When Gopal left for Murshidabad the next day, no one could recognise him! With a big 'tilak' on his forehead and a turban on

his head, he looked a pundit all right. Equally impressive were the clothes worn by him. Two men carried an enormously long packet, well-wrapped in cloth.

The Nawab was told that a famous pundit had been sent by Maharaja Krishna Chandra to see him. Gopal was called in at once.

"Well?" said the Nawab looking him up and down. "Are you any good at calculations? The others sent by your king are a thoroughly useless lot!"

"It depends on what the calculations are, your majesty!" said Gopal. "Not that any calculation is beyond me!"

"What is that funny long packet of yours?" asked the Nawab curiously.

"Oh, that," said Gopal impressively, "is the fourth volume of the Khattanga Purana."

"WHAT purana?" asked the Nawab.

"The Khattanga Purana, Sire."

"But this is absurd! I have never heard of a purana of that name," boomed the Nawab.

"You wouldn't, Sire," said Gopal. "It is an exclusive family purana—belonging to us alone."

In fact, Gopal's 'purana' consisted of a leg of his cot. It had broken loose a few days earlier. Gopal had used three of its legs as firewood. The fourth leg was lying in the kitchen, and Gopal had picked it up and wrapped it up in cloth. A cot is called a "khat" in Bengali, hence the name Khattanga Purana.

"May I take a look at this purana of yours?" asked the Nawab curiously.

"No, indeed," said Gopal promptly. "No one outside our family may touch it. But, tell me, Sire, what is your problem? What is it that the other pundits have not been able to tell you?"

"A simple enough question," said the Nawab. "I merely asked them to tell me what lay at the bottom of the earth."

"Give me time to consult the fourth volume of my Khattanga Purana," said Gopal, "and you shall have your answer by evening."

Gopal was shown into a grand royal rest-room, where he buried himself (or pretended to) with his purana.



In a few hours time, it was evening. The Nawab sent for Gopal. "Well," he said, "have you the answer to my question?"

"No, Sire," said Gopal. "It is beyond the jurisdiction of myself and the other pundits."

"Why?" cried the Nawab.

"We are Hindus. That is why."

"But what has religion got to do with it?" asked the Nawab puzzled.

"Everything," said Gopal. "You see, Sire, when Hindus die, they are burnt. The smoke from the funeral pyre goes to the sky. That is why we are able to calculate everything about the sky and the stars. But the Muslims, when they die, are buried under-

ground. Hence they are the authorities on the earth and all that lies within."

"I see," said the Nawab scratching his head. "It's funny that such an obvious thing did not occur to me! The pundits would know nothing, of course!"

"No, Sire," said Gopal, "it is a matter for our Kazi brothers."

"In that case, take the pundits back with you," said the Nawab, "and take a hundred gold pieces for the trouble taken by you."

Gopal thanked the Nawab and left with the pundits. The Nawab mopped his brow thoughtfully and sent for the Kazis.

Swapna Dutta

JIM THE WONDER DOG

WOULD you believe that a legislative assembly was once convened to watch a dog's superhuman performance? Yes, it is true. Listen to the story of Jim, the wonder dog from Missouri, USA, and his extraordinary faculties.

Both houses of the Missouri Legislative Assembly, like India's Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, were convened to watch Jim's performance. During the course of his amazing display of intelligence, one of the members asked a question in Morse code. He tapped a request to identify a Member. Without the least hesitation, Jim went to the right man and placed his paw on the startled Member's leg!

For seven consecutive years, the names of horses which were entered in a major horse race, were written on separate pieces of paper and spread before this uncanny canine. And each time he placed his paw on the winner even before the race was run. These amazing predictions are recorded by persons who saw the dog performing and therefore cannot be doubted.

Jim could distinguish between Elm, Oak, Walnut and Maple trees as well as decaying stumps. He could also read numbers, pick out the cars with the same number, and recognise a man wearing a black moustache. He could understand orders given in English, French, German, and Italian. He always

obeyed quickly and specifically. His vocabulary seemed endless.

Jim would however perform only for two persons, his owner and his doctor. The doctor would talk to him just as he would to a person. When it was time for the antirabies injection, the doctor would say, "Jim, it is time for your treatment," and the dog would climb the table. The doctor would then say, "You are turned the wrong way," and Jim would immediately turn around.

When the doctor took Jim to his home for the first time, he told the dog, "My little daughter is in the northwest room upstairs; will you please go up and see if she is all right?" When the doctor reached the room, he found Jim with his foot resting protectively on the cradle.

His owner was offered up to \$325,000 (Rs. 2,600,000 nearly) for making a film on Jim's life, but he refused. Racing fans wrote to him that they would happily share the winnings if Jim would do a bit of horse race forecast! The owner always ignored such offers and would not permit his wonder dog to be exploited.

Jim died peacefully in 1937 at the age of 12, and took the mystery with him, but left memories that contradict all theories of animal behavior and hint at things beyond human intelligence and knowledge.

G.V. Joshi

The Little Jade Deer

THERE was once a well at the foot of the dense forests of the Lu-Shan mountain. It was known as the Nymphs' well. People passing through the woods there often heard the sound of a hundred melodious bells tinkling. This sound came from a beautiful jade deer. Though they could hear the tinkle, none had ever seen the deer. Some believed that only those with a heart as pure as the diamond could see it.

In a village near the foothills of the Lu-Shan mountains, there lived a cruel and miserly rich farmer whom the villagers called the Ogre. He had many servants to till his land. Among them was a young man called Cheng, who worked very hard, but often went to bed without any food. There were times when he had even received only blows for all the work he had done! Sometimes he would have to set off early morning and return only by nightfall with a load of firewood on his back.

One evening, when Cheng passed the well in the woods, he saw something shining on its stone wall. Going near, he saw that it was a silver hairpin. He looked around to see if he could find its owner, but no one was in sight. As it was getting dark, he decided to go back to the well the next day. As he bent to pick up his bundle, he heard a small sound behind him. He turned round and saw the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. Her eyes shone like the stars, and she wore a lovely pink dress.

"Have you seen my silver hairpin?" she asked Cheng in the most lilting voice. Cheng meekly gave the pin to her, and in a flash she had vanished!

Cheng was so fascinated by the girl that he went back to the well the next day. He made his visits on many days, but he never saw her again. Then, one evening, something strange happened. Cheng had left his little bundle of food under a tree and was chopping wood. His work over, he settled down to eat his simple meal. But when he untied the bundle, he found that all the rice cakes had disappeared!

Cheng thought that some hungry animal must have eaten them. But this happened again the next day and the next.

Cheng was angry and decided to catch the thief. He left his bundle as usual under a tree and then climbed up a nearby tall pine and waited. Towards afternoon, he heard the sound of a hundred bells jingling, and down the slope came a shining silver ball. As it came nearer, it nearly blinded Cheng with its brightness. When he could see properly, he was shocked to find a little jade deer enjoying the rice cakes.

"I have caught the culprit!" Cheng said. "But why do you steal from me? If I had more food, I would have shared it with you. But as it is, I go hungry so often."

The jade deer looked embarrassed and, blinking its lovely eyes, said, "I cannot return what I have eaten. But if you want a lovely bride, I can help you."

"Oh, thank you for your offer, jade deer," Cheng said. "But I hardly feed myself. How will I then feed my wife also?" he asked.

"Do not worry. I will find you a wife who will make living easier for you. Tomorrow night, when the moon is riding high up in the sky, nine wood nymphs will come to the well to bathe. You choose the one you like best and run away with her dress. She will be unable to go home without her dress and will agree to become your wife." With these words, the jade deer turned round and trotted away into the deep forest, followed by the sound of a hundred bells jingling.

Cheng at once thought of the lovely girl dressed in pink and with the silver hairpin and wished that she was one of the nine nymphs. Then his choice would be certain. The following night, Cheng hid near the well, hardly being able to breathe with excitement.

The moon shone high in the sky and its reflection fell on the clear water in the well. Suddenly, there was a glow all around and a beautiful nymph, dressed in red, gently descended to the well. She was followed by



wife. When they shed their clothes and went for their bath, Cheng picked up the pink dress and ran away into the woods. He kept running till he suddenly heard his name being called. He turned round and saw the ninth nymph standing in front of him. She smiled at him and asked, "Why are you running away? Don't you want me for your wife?"

That day, they were married and they lived happily in his small cottage. His wife spun the finest thread in the land and Cheng took the soft thread to the market and in no time it all got sold. His days of poverty were over.

Now, the newly found happiness of Cheng was not liked by the rich farmer. He pestered Cheng about his secret till he finally told him how the jade deer had helped him get his wife.

The farmer wasted no time. The next day he took a basketful of richly made rice cakes and went to the woods. He left them near the well and hid behind a tree. And by afternoon, he heard the sound of a hundred bells ringing. Sure enough, the little jade deer had come to eat the rice cakes. Hardly had it eaten a couple of rice cakes when the farmer jumped on it from behind the tree and said, "So, it is you who steals my food every day. I would have given it to you, but I myself hardly get enough to eat."

"Oh! I am so sorry," said the jade deer. "I cannot give back what I have eaten, but I can get you a beautiful bride."



another lovely girl dressed in green. Cheng stared at them and could not decide who was more beautiful than the other. And he got more and more confused when there were eight lovely girls to choose from. He still hoped that he would see the lovely girl he had seen the first time. And it seemed as though his prayers were fulfilled, for the last girl that came floating down was none other than the girl of his dream—the girl in the pink dress and with the silver pin in her hair.

Cheng decided that she would be his

"When, and how?" demanded the farmer impatiently.

"Tomorrow night, when the moon is high up in the sky, nine wood nymphs will come here to the well to have a bath. Choose the one you like most and run away with her dress. She cannot go back without her dress and she will agree to be your wife." Saying this, the little jade deer trotted away.

The next night, the farmer hid behind a tree near the well and as was told, the nine beautiful nymphs descended to the well. They took off their clothes and went for their bath. The farmer could not take his eyes off them. Each one of them was more beautiful than the other. So, he decided to have them all for his wives. "After all, I have enough riches to feed them all," he gloated.

So he ran away deeper into the woods with all their clothes. He was soon followed by all the nine nymphs, and smiling and giggling, they formed a circle around him. The first nymph asked him to dance and whirled him round and round. Then she passed him on to the second nymph. They all laughed as he struggled to dance, for he was fat and felt giddy with all the dancing. But they wouldn't leave him alone!

On and on they went, making him dance in spite of his pleadings. They only smiled at him and kept dancing till early morn. By then, he lay in a heap on the ground, nearly dead. The nine nymphs put on their clothes and disappeared. The farmer trundled back home, cursing the nymphs and crying over his aches and pains.

PINKIE

A STRANGE ENCOUNTER

THE STORY SO FAR

What made 13-year-old Vineet feel that he was already familiar with the holiday home where he had accompanied his Auntie and Uncle and their two sons, Madan and Tubby? As their car slowly climbed up to the Kasauli hill that evening, he had started recognising certain landmarks. In fact, he even guessed correctly the existence of a 'big ugly cactus round the next corner'. Uncle was prompted to ask him whether he had been up there earlier! Vineet shook his head, but he could not shake off the uneasy feeling that had struck him. They parked the car half-furlong away from the house and, carrying their boxes, entered the front door. And Vineet felt his heart thudding...

MADAN'S voice dragged him away from his thoughts. "Hey, bhaiyya, why are you standing in the middle of the room like a statue? You haven't even started unpacking yet! I say, our room's bigger than

yours, but it hasn't so many windows. There, Daddy!" Madan had opened one of the windows, and both boys peered down. Uncle was standing in the backyard talking to the chowkidar, who had helped them carry their baggage inside.

A rickety wooden fence that must, at some time, have been painted white, bordered the garden from the hillside. At the leftmost corner, barely a yard away from the house, the hillside fell away sharply. There was a clump of wild, red flowers growing on the edge.

"Come on, let's go down." It was Madan's voice again.

"You go," said Vineet, "I'll first unpack and then join you." He stowed his clothes away in neat piles in the large cupboard, washed his face and hands, and went downstairs.

"Tea in ten minutes!" Auntie called from the kitchen, as he made his way to the backdoor, out on to the lawn. There was no sign of Uncle or of Madan. Only Tubby was sitting there on the grass, intently examining his woolly elephant Boogie's ears.

His sick feelings came back to Vineet again. His feet led him to the left corner of the house. He grabbed the fence and looked down.

Far, far below, he could see the snaky grey road, with cars moving along like ladybirds. One had only to cross a yard from here, to step off into space as it were. In his mind's eye, he could hear it—a thin scream quivering in the air, as the body floated down, down, down...

"Red flowers, pretty flowers, pretty flowers for Boogle," chanted Tubby, straining against the fence, with his arms outstretched towards the clump of wild flowers on the edge of the hill.

"Tubby, no! Don't lean on that fence, it isn't very strong," Vineet bent down and picked up the chubby youngster. With Tubby's soft cheek pressed against his and Boogle's trunk nudging him under the chin, he stared down, unseeing...

"Let's go inside and have tea." It was Uncle's deep voice. His hands were on Vineet's shoulders. "Hm! Dark clouds rolling up. It looks as if it's going to rain. That means no outing for us this evening. Vineet, are you all right? You look a little pale."

"I'm fine, Uncle."

By then, Auntie had joined them. She put her arm around Vineet. "A glass of hot milk, some sandwiches, and cheese 'pakoras' will put the colour back in those cheeks!" she smiled.

"Pakoras! I want pakoras!" Tubby wriggled out of Vineet's grasp and ran inside.

Vineet hugged Auntie. She was his favourite aunt, the nicest of his Mummy's sisters. But how he wished that she herself was here, so that he could reveal to her all the horrible, frightening thoughts in his head!

"That bit of the garden, the left corner, that's dangerous," Auntie was saying to Uncle. "One can have a very nasty fall from there—the fence looks quite inadequate. Did you know about it when you hired the house?"

Uncle shook his head. "Don't worry," he said reassuringly. "Just try and keep Tubby

away from the backyard. Vineet and Madan can take care of themselves."

Madan was already at the dining table. "Where have you been, Madan?" Auntie asked. "Please go and wash your hands before you eat, they're dirty!"

"I was with the chowkidar," Madan whispered to Vineet, as they ate. "He's been telling me some fantastic stories. Tell you later!"

"Guess what?" said Madan excitedly, when tea was over and they had helped Auntie clear up the table. He dragged Vineet into a corner. "You know that corner at the back, where the fence is right on the edge of the hill?"

Vineet nodded and an awful feeling of foreboding began to creep into his mind.

"Well!" continued Madan, his eyes gleaming. "There was an accident there once. A child fell over the edge. That was 20 years ago. A family had taken the house for a few days, just like us—and this happened! What do you think, bhaiyya?"

"Madan! Vineet! One of you run upstairs and see that all the windows of your rooms are shut. It's raining, and the water will get in." Auntie stood in the kitchen doorway, drying her hands on a towel. "Where's Tubby? It's time he had a bath and got ready for bed. He's had a long day."

Vineet ran upstairs, while Madan wandered around calling "Tubby! Tubby!"

Vineet closed the windows in his room, through which the rain had already splattered on the floor below. He pressed the face against the cold glasspane, and stared out into the streaming darkness of the evening.

The chowkidar's story was whirling in his mind. His eyes went to the spot the story described. He screwed up his eyes and concentrated. Was someone there, out in the rain, or was he imagining things?

"Tubby! Tubby!" Auntie's voice floated up the stairs. It was as if an alarm bell was clanging in Vincent's head.

Anupa Lal

(To be concluded)

"LORD" and other poems

LORD

The evening is drawing nearer,
The day is at its close,
Birds fly back to their nests,
Activity is dying out.

Lord, another day is over,
Do I deserve the rest,
Have I done my due—
That I may rest in peace?

Have I done my duty, Lord,
Have I wiped off a single tear,
Have I consoled at least one
Sad heart that longs for comfort?

Lord, have I watched with open eyes,
For a chance, thy cause to serve,
Or have I turned a deaf ear, Lord,
To the cries of many a woeful?

Lord, make me what I should be,
Don't let me remain what I am,
For there is much that I could do,
And have not yet begun.

Give me the mind, O Lord,
That I may of service be,
And in making more hearts happy,
Make myself happier still.

Raju Iyer

GIFTS

A gift is a faithful friend,
and a rose, so full of scent,
A gift is the smile of a baby,
and the sunbeams falling on the sea,
A gift is happiness,
and a light-up heart,
A gift is forgiveness,
and the time we have to part,
A gift is a word which is comforting,
and a nightingale when it is singing,
A gift is the full golden Moon,
and a closed rose which will open soon.

Alpana Ansal (12)

COLOURS

The sky is blue,
With clouds floating,
Like floaters in a swimming pool,
And swimming in the noonday sun.
The rose shines pink in the dawn
Scarlet at midday,
And dark at dusk,
Looking like a plant with three
Distinct colours.
The grass is green,
Greener than an emerald,
People playing on it,
The green, green grass.
White as a sheet,
Whiter than the snow,
Going to bed over you at night,
And you going to sleep.
The colours of the rainbow,
Violet, Indigo, Blue, Green,
Yellow, Orange, Red,
Coming out after the rain,
When the sun is shining bright.

Ajoy Chand Mahtab (9)

Answers to Cricket Quiz

1. Ian Johnson for the first and third Test; Ray Lindwall for the second Test; 2. Ramakant Desai in the first Test in Delhi, December 1959; 3. Amarnath, Umrigar, Pataudi, and Borde; 4. Don Bradman—201 in the Adelaide Test, 1947-48; 5. Total five Tests. Three in India, 1964, and two in India, 1967-68; 6. 9 wickets for 69 runs; 7. 58 at Brisbane, 1947-48. Amarnath was the captain; 8. Bradman in the third Test, Melbourne, and Vijay Hazare in the fourth Test, Adelaide, both in January 1948; 9. Prasanna, 25 wickets in Australia, 1967-68, and 26 wickets in India, 1969; 10. D. Tallon.

HELD OVER

Science-fiction "Ramu in Orbit" and Pen-friends Corner will be resumed in the next issue.—Editor

SHANKAR'S INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S COMPETITION 1977

—SPONSORED BY THE JAWAHARLAL NEHRU MEMORIAL FUND—

Rules

Children all over the world can participate in Shankar's International Children's Competition 1977.

Only children below 16, i. e., those born on or after January 1, 1962, can participate in the Competition.

Each entry should be accompanied by a certificate from the parent/guardian or teacher that it is the original and unaltered work of the competitor during 1977.

Each entry should carry the following details. These must be written in BLOCK LETTERS and in ENGLISH, on the back of the painting or at the end of the written work, as the case may be :

- i) Full name of the competitor
- ii) Full address
- iii) Date of birth
- iv) Nationality
- v) Whether boy or girl
- vi) Subject/Title of the entry

Entries which do not carry these details will not be considered.

Entries by more than one competitor can be sent together.

Entries should be addressed to :

Shankar's International Children's Competition
Nehru House
4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi 110002
India

Entries should reach the above address on or before December 31, 1977. Competitors from countries other than India are advised to despatch their entries well in advance to allow sufficient time for transit by surface mail.

Entries will NOT be returned.

Paintings/Drawings

Paintings or drawings may be done in any media, except black lead pencil.

The size of the painting or drawing should NOT be LESS than 30 cm x 40 cm (12" x 16").

11. A competitor may submit upto 6 entries. They must be sent unmounted.

12. Paintings or drawings may be on any subject the competitor has seen or is interested in.

COMBINED WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Written Work

13. Only entries in ENGLISH will be considered.

14. A competitor may submit upto 6 entries.

15. Entries may be in the form of essays, short stories, poems, plays, descriptive writings, etc.

16. The written work may be on any subject the competitor has seen or is interested in.

Prizes

17. The award of prizes will be decided by the organisers of the Competition with the help of a panel of judges.

18. The painting or drawing adjudged the best will be awarded the President of India's Gold Medal. The Vice-President of India's Gold Medal will be given for the best written work. The next 22 best entries will receive the Nehru Memorial Gold Medals. Besides the above, more than 400 Prizes and about 400 Silver Medals will be awarded.

19. No competitor will be awarded more than 2 prizes.

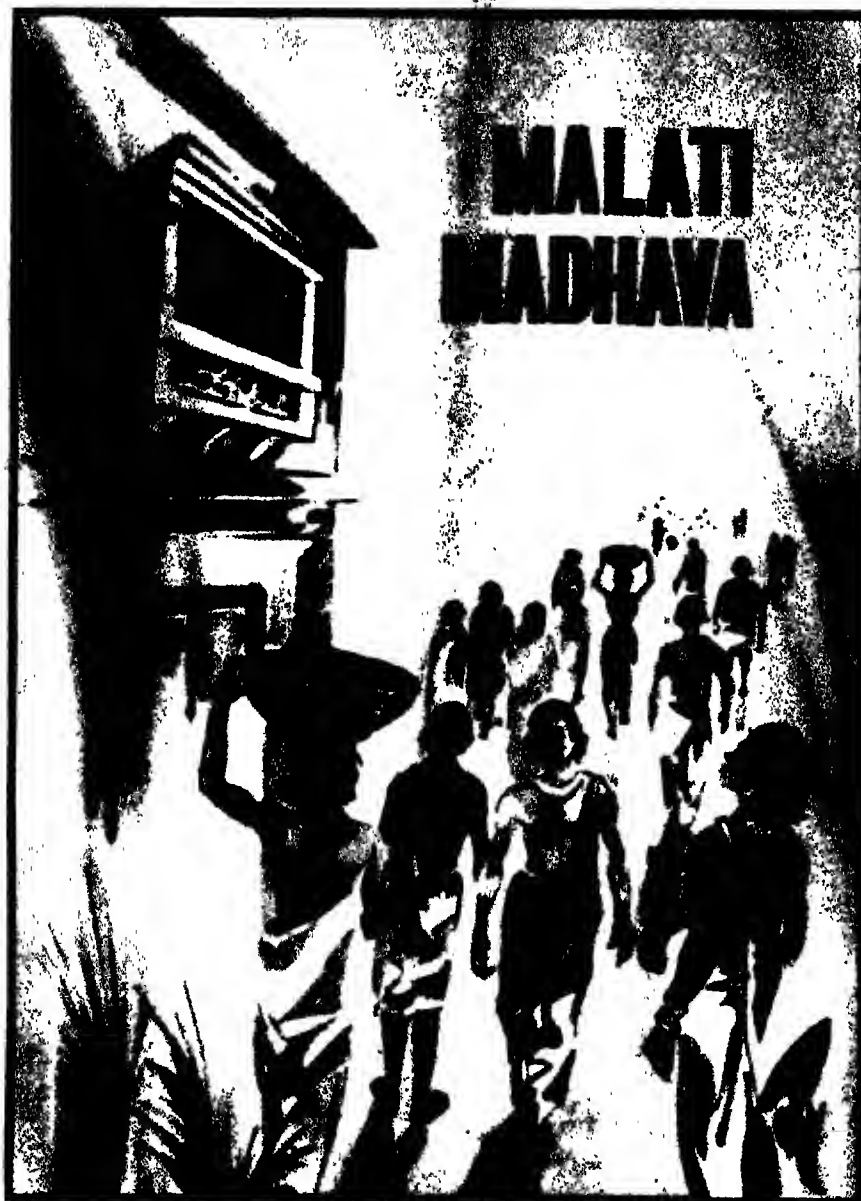
20. The copyright of all entries will rest with the Shankar's International Children's Competition.

21. Among paintings, all those which win prizes other than Silver Medals, and among written entries, all those awarded prizes and a few winning Silver Medals will be published in "Shankar's Children's Art Number Volume 29". Some selected entries will also be published in the "Children's World", a monthly magazine dedicated to the children of the world.

22. All competitors can get "Shankar's Children's Art Number Volume 29" at half-price. Any competitor can reserve a copy.

NOTE: Vol. 29 is expected to be ready by October 1978.

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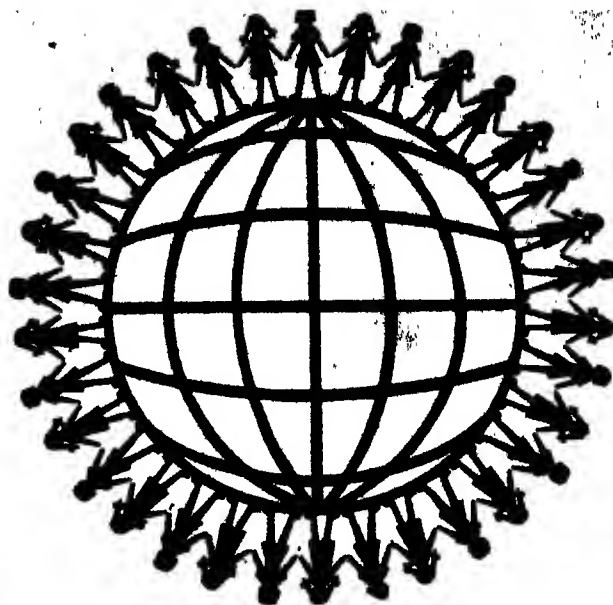
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CHILDREN'S World

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Assistant Editor
K. RAMAKRISHNAN

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Cover: 'Boat Race' by Khandoker Abu Taher Dipu (11) Bangladesh

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Season's Greetings
to all our readers!

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CHILDREN'S WORLD

New Year Resolutions

"I'll kill at least one cockroach every day," said Girish and promptly set about looking for them. He finally found one behind the cupboard and gooshed it with his shoe—I didn't look.

Girish imagines himself to be the world's future cockroach eradicator. He says that cockroaches are the world's oldest living pests and it was time someone thought of a way of getting rid of them, once for all. His killing a cockroach a day was just a small beginning. And I thought it was a pretty good New Year resolution, considering the number of cockroaches Girish and Gautam have in their house.

It was New Year's Day and we were all deciding on our New Year resolutions. The main intention was to see whose resolution would last the longest. We were five of us: Girish and Gautam, Mona and her brother

Rohit, and myself, Anita.

"I'm going to be the greatest inventor in the world," said Gautam. "I'll come up with at least one invention each week. And I will soon beat out Edison!"

I had my doubts about Gautam ever becoming a greater inventor than Edison, but I didn't say a word.

Then Rohit tried to think of a resolution. He thought for about five minutes and then decided that he did not want to make a resolution! We told him that he could make two resolutions next year.

Mona's turn came next. She patted Rohit on the back and said, "I won't quarrel with this kid the whole year."

"Wow," said Rohit, "that means I can use your fountain pen and you won't say a thing!"

"It does not mean that at all," said Mona.



"You touch my pen and you see what I do to you!"

"But you just said . . . you just said"

Mona's resolution did not even last a minute, thanks to Rohit.

And then it was my turn. I thought for some time and said, "Everyday I'll make someone or the other laugh." They all laughed.

Well, Mona's resolution was as good as not made and Rohit didn't even have a resolution. So, that left just Girish, Gautam, and myself.

Girish's resolution lasted for about ten days. Somebody had told him that spiders are so adaptable that they can be found on top of mountains, as well as under the sea. And that fascinated Girish so much that he completely forgot about cockroaches. He could only think in terms of spiders!

As for Gautam, in the first week of the New Year, he converted his cycle into a scooter. That is, he attached a piece of cardboard to the back-wheel in such a way that, when he pedalled, it flapped against the tyre. The noise it made was supposed to make it sound like a scooter! The second week, Gautam attached a bulb to the buzzer. Every time it buzzed, the bulb would flash red. I didn't quite see the point, but Gautam said that at least it was a buzzer with a difference! The third week, Gautam ran out of ideas. Not that I had ever believed he could have outdone Edison!

So that makes me the winner! In case you are wondering how I managed—it is not that I am witty, it's just that I have a ticklish baby sister!

Thank God for babies who are ticklish!

Viswajita Das

HANS GOES FOR A MOVIE

HANS ELL of Hamburg was the only son of his parents. He was nine and a naughty child, though intelligent. He used to go to school riding his shining red bicycle that he got as a present on his birthday.

It was Christmas vacation and Hans was getting restless with nothing much to do. So, one day, he wrapped himself in a woollen coat and a muffler and took out his bicycle and went riding, whistling a tune softly to himself. He hadn't made up his mind where he should go.

Suddenly, he came before a cinema. He remembered he hadn't seen a movie for months. So, he decided to see a film.

Of course, he had his pocket-money with him. His mama had given him some money to buy a Christmas gift for himself. Outside the cinema, he first helped himself to a chocolate ice-cream. He then parked his cycle at the stand and stepped into the hall to get a ticket. As he entered, he was attracted by the colourful posters that had been stuck on the walls all around.

He then caught sight of a ticket counter and briskly walked towards it. "Could you give me a ticket for the next show?" he said to the girl inside the booth.

"It's one Mark, please," she said.

"One Mark? But I've only half Mark with me. Don't you have a ticket for that amount?" he asked desperately.

"I'm sorry, the tickets are a Mark each," she said with a smile.

Hans was naturally disappointed. He turned to go. However, before he went out of the hall, he paused and thought for a second. He then went back to the booth.

"It's one Mark if one sees the film with both his eyes, isn't it?" he said rather incredulously, and added, "I have only half of that. I promise that I shall see the whole movie with only one eye; I shall have the other eye shut. Could you please give me a ticket for half Mark?" he said, pleadingly.

The girl at the counter was too kind and sympathetic to be angry with a naughty boy like Hans. She gave him a ticket, and as she checked the half Mark he handed her, she said with a twinkle in her eye, "It's okay, you can see the film with both your eyes open!"

Hans was too delighted. He thanked the girl and happily went in to see the movie.

*(Adapted from a German Story
by Hema Krishnan)*

Red Wheels' Adventure at Sea

RED WHEELS, in case you don't know, is a cute little green car with red wheels, belonging to Buntoo. They are both very fond of each other and their favourite pastime is going for long drives together. You can often see them driving around the town, with Red Wheels hooting with joy every now and then: "Beep-beep".

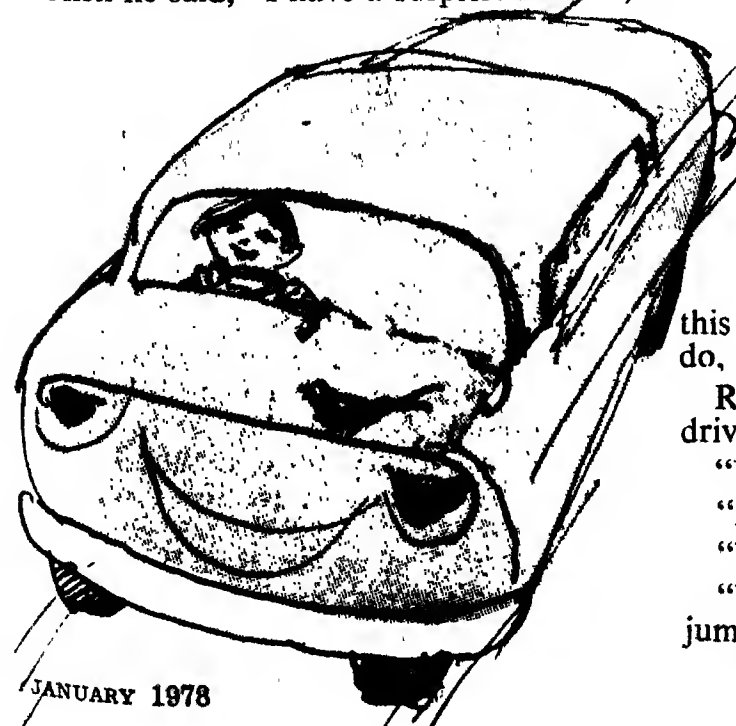
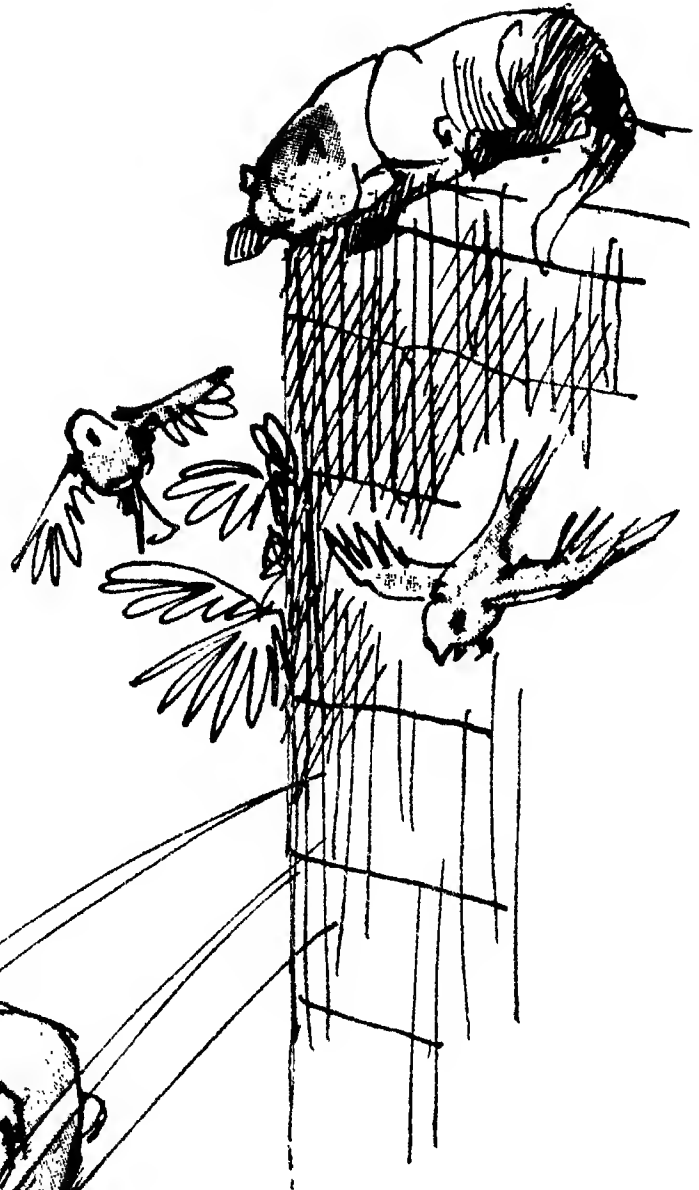
One morning, Red Wheels woke up and peered out of his little garage-house. "Beep-beep. What a lovely morning! Beep!" he cried, happily. He could hardly wait to go for a long drive. But where was Buntoo?

Ah-there he was, at the door. Red Wheels groaned when he saw the duster in Buntoo's hand. "Oh, no, please!" But Buntoo gave him his usual brisk morning-rub.

Red Wheels squirmed. "But I want to go for a long drive..." he protested. "And I'm really very clean."

"You're not!" argued Buntoo and rubbed harder. "Who asked you to go and splash in that muddy puddle yesterday? You're still so dirty."

Then he said, "I have a surprise for you,



this morning. Guess what we're going to do, today?"

Red Wheels tried to guess. "A long drive?"

"Yes, but something more."

"A picnic?"

"Yes...." said Buntoo.

"Whoopee!" yelled Red Wheels and jumped up and down.

Buntoo smiled excitedly. "And guess where—on the beach!"

Red Wheels asked, "A beach? What's that?"

Buntoo explained. "That's where the sea is. There's a lot of sand and water and we're going to have fun."

Red Wheels continued to jump with joy. "Oh, how wonderful! A picnic on the beach. Let's start rightaway...beep-beep!"

Buntoo said, "I'll go and pack a picnic hamper rightaway." He went into the house.

Red Wheels sang with delight, "The beach...the be ee...a-cch...oh! the beeee-aacch...oh...Whoopee!"

Mynah, a little bird heard him. She came and sat on the garage door and then hopped down to the tip of his bonnet and sat there. "Cheep-cheep," she said. "You seem very happy, cheep!"

Red Wheels smiled. "Buntoo and I are going to the beach...Oh-la... la...la!"

Mynah said, "Oh you lucky car. Oh—may I, may I come with you? I could ride all the way sitting on your bonnet."

So Red Wheels, Buntoo, and Mynah started off for their picnic on the beach. Red Wheels ran gaily down to the gate still singing.

Pussy woke up from her nap. She was sitting on the wall. "Miaaaaow," she yawned and put up a fat paw to rub the sleep out of her eyes.

Red Wheels asked her, "Won't you come with us for a picnic on the beach?"

Pussy considered it. She took a long time considering it. For, she stretched herself tall and licked her other paw for a long while before grumbling. "The beach...oh, I hate the sea! There's too much water there. Yawn! I want to go back to sleep." And she did! She circled round and round and then gradually sank down and was fast asleep at once.

Red Wheels, with Buntoo sitting at his wheel and Mynah holding tight to the tip of his bonnet, ran gaily down the road. In about half-an-hour, they reached the beach.

It was full of people sitting or lying down

on the sand. Others were swimming or playing about with huge rubber balls in the sea.

Red Wheels exclaimed happily. "Oh, it seems such fun." He sat down on the warm sand. Buntoo took out the picnic hamper and spread out a mat on the sand.

Mynah hopped around the beach watching all the people.

Buntoo said, "Mm—I'm hungry...why don't we eat something right now?"

So they sat and ate cakes and sandwiches and laddos and potato wafers until they felt full to their throats.

"Blurp!" gurgled Buntoo "I'm so full. I think I'll go and take a long walk. And then I'll go for a swim." He got up and disappeared into the crowd. Mynah decided to take a 'fly-around' to see everything.

So Red Wheels was left alone. He saw the children running on the beach, chasing each other and playing ball. He saw them riding ponies along the beach. He felt like taking a run on the sand himself. He watched a tall graceful camel go by with a hump load of excited children and felt more and more like exploring the beach himself.

Now, if you remember, Red Wheels was a naughty sort of car who loved to go for little drives on his own and he had got into scrapes before....what would Buntoo say if he knew...?

Red Wheels peered over his shoulder. No, Buntoo was nowhere in sight. Even Mynah was far away.

So he started off with an excited 'Beep!' He rolled down the beach all by himself. It was a cool morning and he enjoyed himself, running along on the soft sand, though the sand did get into his nostrils and make him sneeze.

Nobody noticed the runaway car.

Red Wheels ran on and on until he felt tired. Buntoo was still nowhere to be seen, neither was Mynah. So Red Wheels rested himself and looked at the sea. Everybody seemed to be enjoying themselves, swimming among the waves. Red Wheels suddenly decided to go for a swim, too.

He ran down to the waves and a large

wave carried him further away. He splashed around happily and hooted with joy. "Beep-beep.... Ha-ha-ha-ha—What fun! Beep-beep."

At that very moment, some distance away, a Fish family—the Minnows—were having their midday meal. Mamma Fish was trying to make Baby Fish swallow his share but no, Baby Fish just swam around obstinately, just out of her reach, and kept his mouth clamped shut. Mamma Fish followed him, gurgling angrily. "Baby, come back here.....right now." She bubbled.

Baby Fish first laughed naughtily and swam on and on, out of reach and beyond their home-territory. He felt free and happy and jumped around in the waves to prove it to himself. Then he swam on and on and reached a point where all the water-plants stopped growing, and all he could see on the sea-floor were pebbles and sand and shells.

Baby Fish turned around to look behind him. Where was home? He turned to his right and he turned to his left. Water, water everywhere. No Mamma Fish, no Pappa Fish, no Grandma or Grandpa Fish anywhere in sight. Baby Fish's heart turned cold. He was lost. He waved his little pink fins but no, there was nobody to see him and wave back.

Poor Baby Fish sobbed and swallowed so much water that he choked. Then he sobbed some more.

"What do I do?" he cried, bitterly. He began to feel very hungry and looked around for some water-insects or worms. But no, all he could see for yards were pebbles and sand and sea-shells. Baby Fish picked up a bright pink shell and tried to swallow it. He spat it out in disgust and cried more than ever.

Then he saw a huge green shape loom up in front of him. The monster had large red circular ears, or so Baby Fish thought.

"Help!" shrieked Baby Fish and swam in fright.

"Hi, Beep-beep," said Red Wheels in a friendly voice. "Don't be scared. It's me,

Red Wheels—let's be friends."

Baby Fish stopped swimming away. He whispered softly. "Hello, what, what are you...Red Wheels? Are you a fish like us?"

Red Wheels smiled. "No—my dear friend. I'm a car. I belong to Buntoo. And who are you?"

"B....b...baby Fish..." sobbed the little fellow. "I'm lost....I....I...ran away... bec.... because I didn't want...t...t...to eat my lunch...Now...I'm lost.... I want to go home...I want to go home....Whaaaaa....."

"Don't cry..." said Red Wheels. "I'll help you. Where's your family?"

"I don't know...Whaaaa..." sobbed Baby Fish.

Red Wheels opened his door. "Hop in," he said kindly. "I'll take you there." Baby Fish stopped crying and swam into the car, happily.

Red Wheels plunged through the waves and stopped near a wise-looking old sea-turtle. "Excuse me, Grandpa," he said, "but do you know where this little fellow lives? He's lost his way."

Grandpa Turtle peered in at Baby Fish. "Why....I believe it's the littlest Minnow fellow, isn't it? Well, go on straight ahead you'll find them there."

Red Wheels smiled. "Thank you," he said and swam on.

Suddenly Baby Fish gave a shout. "There they are! Oh, thank you so much, Red Wheels!"

The whole Fish family surrounded Red Wheels and patted him with their fins and grinned at him gratefully. Baby Fish went tearing into his mother's fins and cried and said "sorry" a dozen times.

Suddenly, Red Wheels remembered Buntoo and Mynah and the people on the beach. 'I must return,' he thought, 'or they'll get worried.' He asked his new-found friends the way back to the beach. They all pointed, "That way."

Red Wheels swam a short distance after saying "Good-bye" to Baby Fish and his



family. Then, suddenly, he got tired. His wheels just would not move. He was too tired after his adventure at sea. He sighed, "Oh...Oh...help me!"

The Fish family gathered round him and held a consultation with one another.

Then... "Heave ho!" said the strongest Uncle Fish. "We'll take you on our backs." So they all heaved-ho and lifted Red Wheels on to their backs and started swimming speedily to the shore. Red Wheels relaxed and shut his eyes.

Then all the fishes halted. "There!" said Uncle Fish. "That's the shore. I'm sorry we can't come on any further or we won't be able to return home."

Red Wheels took a flying leap off their back and floated on a large breaker-wave to shore. "Bye-bye. Beep-beep," he called. All his friends lifted their fins to wave to him. "Bye-bye, dear Red Wheels."

Red Wheels flopped down on the sand and panted. He was so tired! Then, a moment later, he heaved himself up and ran along the beach to where he had left Bunttoo and Mynah.

He had expected to see them in a flurry over finding him missing. But no, Bunttoo was just coming out of the water, dripping after a swim. And Mynah was just returning from her 'fly-around'.

"Hello, Red Wheels," greeted Bunttoo and flopped down on the mat. "I had a lovely swim. You must have been getting so bored just sitting here, doing nothing. I wish you could swim...."

"Yes," said Mynah. "I had such fun, too. I wish you could fly. Then you could have come with me.... Poor Red Wheels!"

"I hope you didn't get bored," said Bunttoo, rubbing himself dry. "Just sitting all by yourself and doing nothing...."

Red Wheels winked to himself. Little did they know of his great adventure at sea. What a tale he would have to relate to his friend, Pussy, when they got home!

Padmini Rao

CHILDREN'S WORLD

GOPI'S EXPLOITS

MY cousin Gopi had an admirable knack for mischief. It was like a god-given gift he had been born with. Gopi was three years younger than I and, in the peaceful days of our childhood, I bore him a secret grudge. He was so well known or, better still, notorious, as a two-legged monster who inspired dread in the victims of his mischief. I think that in my childhood's fancy, I myself had aspired to that position! Some found him a great source of amusement. But I distinctly remember how his mother, Aunty Malathy, used to be on pins and needles. He was more than a handful for her. I once heard her remark that Gopi should be bound to a tree and

thrashed soundly! But he was too clever to be caught.

At school, Gopi was always getting into fights, mostly of his own making. On one occasion, he came home with a swollen eye, purple and throbbing! Aunty took up the matter with the Principal, who was a sober gentleman with horn-rimmed spectacles. A worried frown perpetually creased his brows, as if the burden of the school, particularly of Gopi, rested heavily on his ageing shoulders. In the course of her discussion with him, Aunty Malathy hinted broadly about having to consider taking Gopi away from the school. Imagine her dismay when, with a look of utter relief,



he said, "Madam, I'm sorry to say so, but the school will be a much happier place without Gopi!"

Once, we went to the beach at Trivandrum for a picnic. After an enjoyable time, we had just settled down to feasting ourselves on the basketload of delicacies that we had brought along, when we discovered that Gopi's sister Lata's half-sari had been neatly cut at the shoulder. She was in tears and the culprit, Gopi, was strangely missing. We tried to concentrate once again on our plates after consoling Lata when, from nowhere it seemed, Gopi emerged brandishing a large crab, threatening to dump it on our plates. That was the last straw. Our picnic came to a halt. We all headed back for home in grim silence!

No account of Gopi's hair-raising mischief can be complete without the incident that even now sends us into fits of laughter. My aunt had given up Gopi as a lost case, beyond redemption! So Granny took charge of him, muttering in a voice loud enough for all to hear, "These days, parents don't know how to bring up their children." Gopi was admitted to a school in Trivandrum and Aunt Malathy went back to Bangalore.

Gopi was invariably late from school, consequently sending Granny into a flurry of panic. Of course, each time he had a convincing yarn to spin, about a bus breakdown, or extra classes and so on, while in reality, he would have been in a friend's house or watching a football game or just 'hanging around'. With true reformatory zeal, Granny plunged into the task of tackling this problem. Her orders were that Ramu, our old and trusted servant, would escort Gopal from school. Ramu had served Granny for fourteen years. He was a meak, old man, who had great affection for Gopi, whose taunts he sportingly suffered in silence.

For a week, everything went along fine, and Granny was immensely pleased that she had at last succeeded in 'belling the cat'. "The right measure of tact and firmness," she said, with a twinkle in her eye. However, one evening, both Gopi and Ramu were missing! Gopi's school used to be over at 3.30, but it was already 6, and there was no sign of either of them. The clock

silently ticked away the minutes, and Granny was visibly upset. "Don't worry, Granny, it will be all right," I said, in a vain attempt to console her. But she was not to be pacified.

We were seated in the front verandah of our house. The street beyond murmured with the sounds of passing vehicles, whose lights provided patchy illumination. Suddenly, a jeep turned into our gate and stopped at the portico. And who should emerge from it but a sheepish looking Gopi, a tired and deflated Ramu, and a smart-looking Police officer. Granny's face was a mixture of emotion fighting for expression. She could only nod when the officer queried, "Is this your grandson, Madam?"

Then he pointed to Ramu. "Is he in your employ?"

"Yes," said Granny, "for the last so many years."

"Now, just for the sake of routine counterchecking, did you send him to escort your grandson from school?" the officer asked.

"Yes, of course. Why do you ask?"

The officer burst out laughing. Exasperated, Granny asked, "Why, is anything wrong? What has my grandson done?"

"Why don't *you* ask him?" said the officer, trying hard to control his laughter. "I'm leaving now." And, then, as a parting shot, he added, "You have a very naughty grandson!"

We watched the retreating jeep in astonished silence. In bits and pieces, the curtain was raised on an interesting drama.

When Ramu reached the school that evening, Gopi was highly excited about a basketball match being played between the Juniors and Seniors. He was bent upon going to the Railway Maidan where it was being held. "Come along, Ramu, we'll go home after that."

Ramu tried to dissuade him. "Granny will be worried. We'll get her permission and then I'll take you."

Gopi was adamant, saying it would be too late. While they were arguing thus, Gopi suddenly shot off into the crowded street on agile feet. Ramu was old, but not incapacitated. Though caught unawares, he gave Gopi a hot chase. Gopi took a side

lane, Ramu faithfully following behind, puffing and panting and pleading with him to stop. Then, Gopi spotted a police jeep cruising at slow speed ahead. Mustering a final spurt of energy and only thinking of how best to get to the Railway Maidan, he dashed towards it. As he approached it, he gestured frantically and shouted, "Help! Help! Kidnapper!"

The jeep came to a screeching halt, and a Police officer jumped out. But Gopi continued to run furiously, turning round and pointing to Ramu, who had by then reached the jeep, out of breath and red in the face. However, the officer outwitted Gopi. In no time, he hauled him into the jeep with a pair of sturdy hands. He then subjected both Ramu and Gopi to some cross-questioning, and in a matter of minutes he got the truth out.

"Young man, you should not carry your mischief too far," the officer laughingly admonished a very subdued Gopi. "I was tempted to believe you, but your eyes told me you had some mischief up your sleeve! Do you know what would have happened to Ramu if I had believed you?"

Ramu narrated all this and said, "Yes, I nearly landed myself in jail. Gopi is always

like that, never means anything, but this was quite naughty of him."

By this time Granny's resolve to reform Gopi had vanished completely. She purposefully went inside the house. I was badgering Ramu and Gopi with questions for some time, when we heard the telephone being used. We overheard Granny say, "Malathy, if you don't come here and take this son of yours with you right now, I'll go crazy.....!"

Lakshmi Mohan

THE SKY AT NIGHT

When I lie down in bed at night
And look up at the sky,
I see the moon hiding
Behind the clouds to beguile the twinkling
stars.

The sweet smelling jasmine blooms then,
Filling the air with her scent.
The beauty of the sky opens
In this bower of white starry flowers.
The sky is also lovely in the day,
When it is covered with white fleecy
clouds,

And the fragrant rose smiles.
But I love the night more,
Because that is when the sweet smelling
White flowers grow.

*Gargi Mitra
India*

THE DAYS OF OLDE

How I wish I could
Be in the days of olde,
When the Knights
Were brave and bold.
Fighting villainous barons,
Saving queens and kings,
From dragons and
Other such things!
The high walls of the baron's castle,
The Knights of olde had to scale,
Usually using women's hair-braids,
To save them from that jail!
Oh, yes, sir!
Those Knights were bold!
In the days
Of olde!

*M. Sri Ram (11)
India*



The World and the Gods

THE Greeks have a story which describes how the world was created.

It is said that Mother Earth, Ge, evolved out of chaos. She had a son called Uranus. One day, while she was asleep, Uranus showered her with fertile rain, thus creating the flora and fauna of the world. This same rain gave birth to the rivers, lakes, and oceans.

Mother Earth had several other children, including the giant, one-eyed Cyclops, and other strange beings. Greek mythology is full of fascinating stories about monsters, titans, satyrs—half goat and half man—centaurs—half horse and half man—and other weird creatures.

But to return to the gods, Uranus was killed by his son Cronus who, in his turn, was deposed by his third son, Zeus or Jupiter. Cronus, who had been forewarned that this would happen, attempted to avert this disaster by swallowing all his children as soon as they were born. He was finally tricked into swallowing a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes, in place of the infant Zeus.

Zeus was reared by the mountain nymph and fed by the goat-nymph Amalthera. Later, in gratitude, he took one of Amalthera's horns, which was shaped like a cow's, and this became the cornucopia or horn of plenty, which was always filled with whatever food or drink its owner wished for.

When Zeus attained manhood, he rescued his brothers and sisters by forcing his father to vomit them up, and they emerged grateful and fully grown. Zeus then became king of all the gods and goddesses, and ruled on Mount Olympus, the celestial abode of the gods.

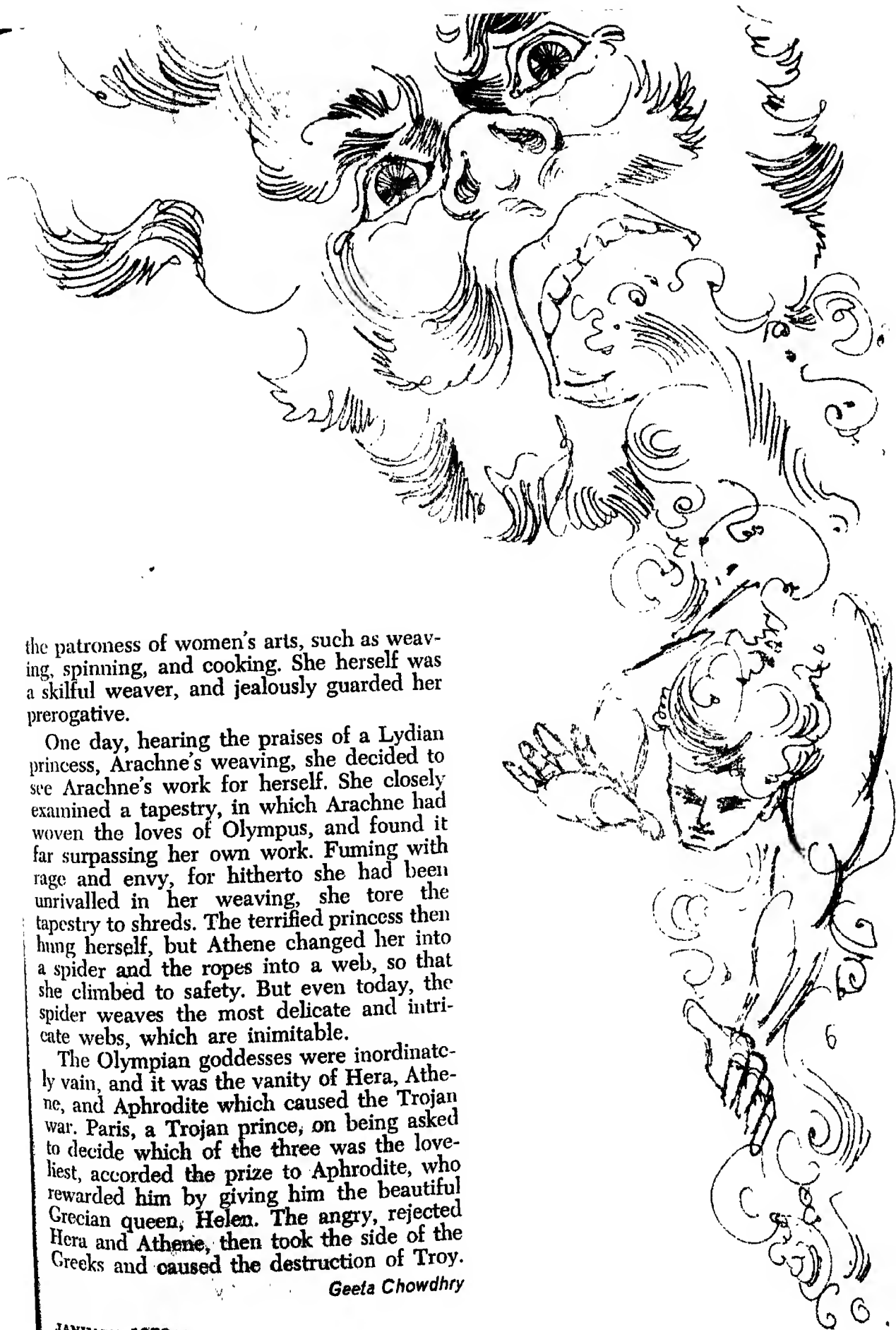
The Olympian deities were a frivolous, irresponsible lot, who did as they pleased, often causing mischief and strife among gods and men, through carelessness, envy and spite. Hera or Juno, Zeus's wife, was

notorious for her fits of jealousy. Among the other gods and goddesses were Posiedon or Neptune, ruler of the seas, and Hades or Pluto, king of the dead, both of whom were brothers of Zeus. Ceres or Demeter was the goddess of fertility, Mars or Ares, the god of war, Hermes or Mercury, the herald, distinguished by a pair of winged sandals and a round hat. He was also notorious for lying and trickery. Among the most notable of Zeus's children were Athene, the goddess of war, Aphrodite or Venus, his adopted daughter, the goddess of love, Apollo the sun god, and his twin sister Artemis or Diana, the chaste huntress and moon goddess, and Hephaestus or Vulcan, the ugly, deformed smith god. There were several other minor deities as well, such as Hebe, cup-bearer to the gods.

Aphrodite, who was exquisitely beautiful, was the mother of Cupid or Eros, the god of love. Cupid is depicted as a winged cherub, armed with a bow and arrows, with which he shot love darts into people's hearts. Aphrodite herself rose fully grown from the sea, riding in a scallop shell.

The story of Athene or Minerva's birth is an interesting one. Zeus had been warned that if her mother, Metis, bore him a son, this son would destroy him. To avert this calamity, he swallowed Metis whole. One day, while he was walking on the shores of Lake Triton, he suffered a terrible headache. The pain was so excruciating that his howls of agony reached the skies. Hermes rushed to his aid, and instantly divined its cause. He fetched Hephaestus, who made a breach in Zeus's skull, and out sprang Athene, armed and fully grown.

Athene, the favourite daughter of Zeus, though often referred to as the Martial Maid, was basically pacific. Unlike Ares, who encouraged wars, she preferred to settle disputes peacefully. She invented the plough, rake, ships, the science of numbers, the earthenware pot, flute and trumpet, and was



the patroness of women's arts, such as weaving, spinning, and cooking. She herself was a skilful weaver, and jealously guarded her prerogative.

One day, hearing the praises of a Lydian princess, Arachne's weaving, she decided to see Arachne's work for herself. She closely examined a tapestry, in which Arachne had woven the loves of Olympus, and found it far surpassing her own work. Fuming with rage and envy, for hitherto she had been unrivalled in her weaving, she tore the tapestry to shreds. The terrified princess then hung herself, but Athene changed her into a spider and the ropes into a web, so that she climbed to safety. But even today, the spider weaves the most delicate and intricate webs, which are inimitable.

The Olympian goddesses were inordinately vain, and it was the vanity of Hera, Athene, and Aphrodite which caused the Trojan war. Paris, a Trojan prince, on being asked to decide which of the three was the loveliest, accorded the prize to Aphrodite, who rewarded him by giving him the beautiful Grecian queen, Helen. The angry, rejected Hera and Athene, then took the side of the Greeks and caused the destruction of Troy.

Geeta Chowdhry

A black and white line drawing of a boy sitting up in bed. He is wearing a long-sleeved shirt and is looking out of an open doorway. A dog is standing in the doorway, looking back at the boy. The boy is holding a blanket over his lap. The bed has a simple wooden frame. The doorway is open, and the dog is standing on the floor outside the room.

CHILDREN'S WORLD

'Form your lines and go to class'—
 'Be Quick!'—and so are we,
 Our classroom's big, I love my desk,
 My friend Jai sits with me.

Our Teacher comes, we all stand up,
 'Good morning, Miss,' we say,
 'Good morning, boys and girls,' she says.
 And so begins our day!

'Now for lessons. Take your books,'
 We read and spell and sing.
 We write the numbers, count them too—
 It all goes with a swing.

Naughty Rita plays instead,
 While Vinoo drops his books,
 Raman ties up Sita's plait—
 She screams, and teacher looks.

'Don't be naughty, boys and girls,
 It's study-time, you know,'
 We all sit still and read once more,
 And keep our voices low.



There's a blackboard on the wall,
 She calls us, one by one,
 She writes the sums, we work them out,
 I do think it's such fun!

Priti does not know to count,
 She keeps quiet and just stands,
 Raji gets them all quite right,
 So, we all clap our hands!

Now the bell rings once again,
 'Tis time for lunch and play,
 We all take out our tiffin-box,
 And put our books away.

I share my sweets and lemon-cake,
 Neeti's grapes are sweet,
 Jai has 'puris', pickles too—
 Delicious! It's a treat!

And now we run. Our playground's big,
 We love to slide and swing,
 And the see-saw is such fun,
 We feel like birds with wings.



There's a ladder which we climb,
 And rocking-horses too,
 Kiddies love them, so do we!
 And so, I know, would you!

It's time for lessons once again,
 For don't you hear the bell?
 Our Hindi teacher comes in now,
 We read and write and spell.

Then we cut out pictures
 For our books and the wall,
 Till it's time for painting,
 I love that best of all!

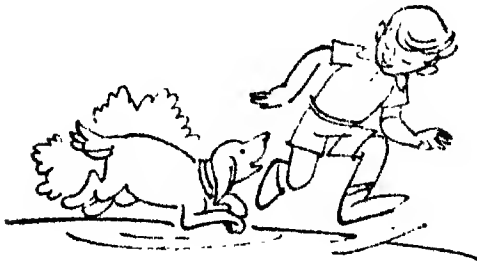


The bell rings, oh so loudly,
And school is o'er for us,
We scramble down the staircase,
And rush into our bus.

'Thank you, Miss! Good afternoon!'
'Bye-bye, girls and boys!'
We wave and teacher waves to us,
We're off—with cheers and noise.

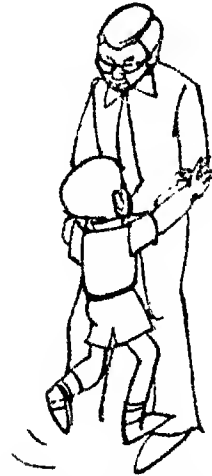
My Mummy's at the bus-stop—
She has waited long for me,
Jip is there beside her,
We all rush home for tea.

It's play-time now, I call for Jip,
And to the garden run,
We chase each other on the lawn,
And tumble down in fun.



Jai and Neelu join us too,
And Dick is there, with Kate,
Hide and Seek's our favourite game,
We play on, till it's late.

Now it's time for study,
My home-work I complete,
I hear Mum call me downstairs,
It's time to rest and eat.



My Daddy's home from office,
I run and hold him fast,
He asks what I've been doing,
If I've been first—or last!

We eat and I start yawning,
The clock chimes—what a row!
'Be off with you,' says Mummy,
'It's bed-time for you now'.

Good night, Mum and Daddy,
And bye, friends, old and new!
Do come and spend a day with me
I'd love it, wouldn't you?

Swapna Dutta

SUCCESS

To some, success spells
All getting and gaining.
To others, it is just
Wide victory and winning.
With results and rewards
Many associate it,
Still many with worldly
Wealth identify it.

Very very right
They all may be;
But with them
I quite disagree.
I look at triumph
Differently, my dear—
In all earnest effort
I see SUCCESS, clear....

Homai Sauna

"The World of the Child"

—IN PAGEANT

"**T**HE World of the Child', a pageant in dance, music and mime, is being presented by Springdales School, New Delhi, as a prelude to the International Year of the Child, 1979. It takes you through the child's experience of life, from birth to adolescence, highlighting the positive aspects of a child's life, at home and in society. While all children love to sing and play and laugh and grow, the majority of the world's children live in ignorance, poverty, and disease. Fear, violence and racial conflict also leave an indelible imprint in the mind of the child."

That is an excerpt from the Press hand-out Mrs. Kumar, the Principal of Springdales School, gave me. It does sum up what 'The World of the Child' was about, but it's like saying "the sunrise is red"... because there was so much more to the pageant than "the aspects of a child's life". Sequence after sequence, on the stage in Kamani Auditorium, spoke of months of hard work, co-operation, and enthusiasm (apart from the world of a child, of course). A cast of nearly 500 talented Springdaliens, of all shapes and sizes, had worked on the pageant from last July, not to speak of any number of teachers!

The pageant itself was divided into sequences, and each sequence sang of a

particular aspect of a child's life. In the foyer at Kamani were displayed a whole lot of lovely posters on these aspects—the child 'in embryo', 'at birth', 'in play', 'under racial conflict', 'in the world of today', 'in tomorrow's world', and many more. Each sequence dealt with its theme in a particular way by a dance drama with symbols, or by mythological or literary reference, or by a short skit (to mention just a few).

But who thought of a theme like this, you must be wondering. So new, so unusual. I



The prayer of the unborn child (extreme right): "I am not yet born," it says and spells out its hopes, aspirations, what it expects to give and to receive.

asked many students and quite a few teachers, and every one of them pointed to their Principal, Mrs. Kumar. She even wrote the script. But that very charming lady just laughed and waved her hand. "What I did was nothing," she said (just as all her colleagues and students had said about themselves before her. Fortunately, I thought of putting the question in another way, and I asked her what had made her think of an idea like this. First she explained that Springdales was planning a series of programmes on the Child, as a prelude to 1979 which, as you all know, is to be Children's International Year. 'The World of the Child' is the first. "I like my projects to be educative," she continued, "not just entertaining.



The child's first needs—love and parental care

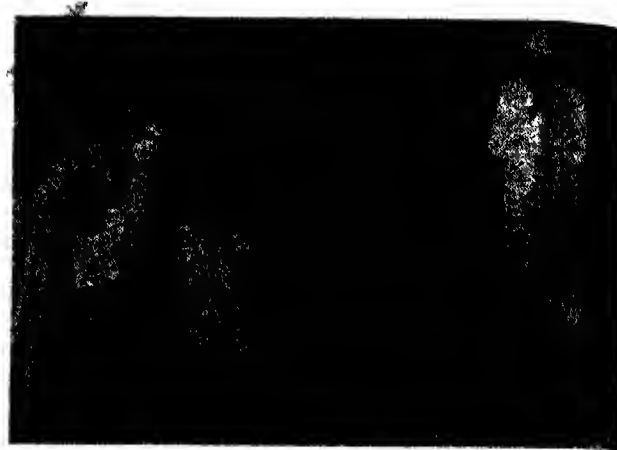
I hope 'The World of the Child' will increase awareness about the plight of the child today...many of us don't realise that while all children do love to laugh and play, and all children do need love and security, most children live in poverty and neglect. We don't realise what the impact of racial conflict and war is on a child. Do you know, even some of my own students came to me after we started working on the pageant, and asked me if it is true that only one out of every four children in the world lives in comfort. They all come from affluent homes, after all, and they never had any concept of poverty. I'm very glad this has helped them at least to realize that everybody is not as fortunate as themselves, and I hope other people will come to realise it, too.

To bring home their point more forcefully, the Springdalianians have used an interesting and, I think, new technique—in the scenes depicting poverty, hunger, or disease, they used really poor children—the children of their own peons, attendants and other 'karmcharis'. To me, at least, these little children were more moving than anything else in the pageant...perhaps because it was the real fear on their faces. I asked Mrs. Kumar how her students reacted to them. "They were so shy," she said, and added with a slightly unnecessary touch of indignation, "my students are not snobs!"

And what was behind all the projection of Springdalian talent? People, of course. Mr. Sinha, who is the school dance instructor, handled the choreography and training. He



The child receives its first shock—while it is in communion with Nature, it espies actions that destroy Nature, and is bewildered.



The child suffers want and ignorance—a dramatic depiction of the theme based on Dickens's 'Christmas Carol'.

did a tremendous job—because every dance (and there were a lot) was beautifully executed. Mrs. Bose was in charge of the costumes and the set design; Mr. Banerjee handled the Indian music, while Mrs. Das Gupta was in charge of the Indian songs. Mrs. Sharma attended to the slide projection and the speech training. The slide projection was a lovely idea. The slides, provided by the UNICEF and the African National Congress, were projected in between sequences. I felt if they had been projected in such a way that they covered the whole of the backdrop, it would have been more effective. The Western music was handled by Susmit Bose, the famous folk singer, and his wife, Jyoti Bose. Susmit Bose composed the music for two of the songs in the pageant and sang them too. It was the first time he had worked with children, and he described it as "just super!" He felt that younger voices are much more flexible than older ones, which makes training easy and working fun.

Then there was the pageant itself, and the nearly 500 young people who participated in it. I wish I could have talked to all of them, because everybody seemed to have something to say; as things were, generally everybody seemed to feel that it was tremendous fun. The senior students were able to say more. Ritu Grover, who acted as Yasoda and is in Standard 10, said that the theme "really affected" her, and Nandini Talwar, an 11th standard elocutionist, who brilliantly played the part of a suffering Negro child, felt the same way. Pradip Roy

a 9th standard singer with a lovely voice, said that they couldn't show everything in just one-and-a-half hours, but it was a tremendous effort anyway. Charu Goswami, a lovely lady all dressed in white, played Hope and appeared in three scenes. Busy applying make-up on a friend's face, she said she really liked doing a part in the pageant and that she thought everything was lovely. Inderjit Khurana, a little 7th standard student who modestly claims herself to be an allrounder, opened the Pageant under a spotlight as the 'unborn child.' It was she who told me about Mrs. Kumar being a ballerina as well. Ritu Grover, who also played the part of Nature, and Inderjit were both trained by Mrs. Kumar.

I would like to say a special word for Chetan Pandotra and Anoop Bhanibani. Chetan is in the 11th standard and he had four roles. I can only describe his dancing as 'wonderful', because his lithe grace filled me with wonder. It seems unfair that a boy should be such a beautiful dancer when many girls (me, for instance) can only dawdle! Anoop was perhaps the most enchanting figure in the Pageant, if not the most talented. Anoop, who is in Standard 6, did two roles, one as Sindhu, the boy protector of the birds and the bees, and another as a childhood playmate of Lord Krishna, and he certainly did both beautifully.

The sequences themselves were out of this world. The first one was 'The Child in Embryo' and it depicted the unborn child

anticipating the world—the beauty of nature, the fearful elements, the de-humanising elements in society, violence, and above them all, hope, love and peace. Here I must say a word for the beautifully done narration: there were three 'voices' behind it, Jyoti Bose, Premika Ratnam, an 11th standard Springdalian, and Ramu Damodaran, the radio personality.

Apart from the first sequence, I found 'The Child in communion with Nature', 'In the World of Fantasy', 'In Fun and Frolic', 'Under Apartheid', and 'In Tomorrow's World' particularly charming. 'The Child in the World of Fantasy' was very sweetly done—it was a short skit based on Rabindranath Tagore's 'Hero'. 'Fun and Frolic' turned to Indian mythology and mimed Krishna stealing butter. In the background were sung Surdas's inimitable lyrics. 'The Child in Tomorrow's World' was marked by a lovely dance—the Dance of Peace—with girls dressed as angels. A little less bright red lipstick might have been better, though. One of the sequences was a market scene to depict children going to work to earn their livelihood. I thought this was sweeter and more realistic than any other sequence, because every market in India is marked by the little shoe-shine boys and sari-sellers (and ruffians) that were shown.

The Pageant, on the whole, was lovely. "I'm sure it will be a success," said 8th standardean Alka. And it certainly was!

Minnie P. Swami



Landlords do not spare even children who toil for them—and mercilessly snatch away crops they have made out of their sweat.
(Photos courtesy : Springdales School)

A Frog Called Jaisimha!

MANI caught the tadpole near his house that evening. It was really very small. He could have held two of them in his palm. Putting it in the bottle of water in his hand took hardly a minute.

Arvind, of his class, and Sridhar of the tenth were with him.

"A real beauty!" Sridhar assured them. "Mr. Dias will be no end pleased!"

For a few minutes they all watched the tadpole flip its tail in the specially procured muddy water.

"He was real mad with us," Sridhar chortled. "Told our class to catch a tadpole and bring it. No one did! Said we were no good and had no enterprise!"

Enterprise was a favourite word with Mr. Dias, and they spent a few joyful moments imitating Mr. Dias in his various moods before parting in high spirits.

The next morning dawned, with the promise of glory in Mr. Dias's class. Mr. Dias

showered praise as easily as he scolded. He would forget it all the next day, but who wouldn't like to be called an 'enterprising boy whose example should be followed by the rest of his class'?

"Now, Mani here has shown great enterprise. How is it in this rainy season, none of you except Mani has got even a single tadpole? One does not learn Zoology from textbooks—you must look for your lessons in Nature. Like Mani here—who saw, pounced, and caught the tadpole!"

Mani sighed, as he woke up from his pleasant daydreams as he approached the classroom. Alas, for Mani, Mr. Dias had not yet come. He didn't want to leave his precious tadpole in the lab. Who knew which upstart fifth standard boy would unscrew the bottle and let the tadpole out? And, so, he took it with him to class.

The tadpole was watched with admiration by all the boys who met him. Mani's



classmates crowded around him and watched the tadpole's energetic dives with fascination.

"We need a name for him!" announced Prakash. "He'll feel hurt to be referred to as 'it'!"

The suggestions came fast. 'Tony!' 'Sammy!' 'Bottles!' 'Tailpiece!'

"Shame!" said Prakash. "Can't you think of an Indian name?" Prakash's father was a politician and Prakash had picked up some tricks from him. "Let's give him a nice Sanskrit name!"

They all turned to Ranjan who was good at Sanskrit. 'Mandaluddhi' was ruled out because it would hurt the tadpole's feelings. 'Nalinaksha' was accepted by a few. Ranjan tried again. This time, 'Jaisimha', the third suggestion, was unanimously accepted. By then, the bell rang and they just had time to deposit their books before dashing to the Assembly.

The first period was Maths. Mr. Prasad, the Mathematics master, might not have noticed anything fishy (or froggy, you could say) if Mani and Arun had not stooped to look and ascertain that Jaisimha was all right.

"What have you got there?" he demanded.

"Jaisimha, Sir," said Mani solemnly.

"What?" asked Mr. Prasad, bewildered.

"Jaisimha—our tadpole," Mani lifted up the bottle.

Mr. Prasad looked at the bottle distastefully.

"Can't you put it in clean water?" he asked with some irritation.

"No, Sir! The mud contains minerals necessary for the tadpole's survival," they all hastened to inform him.

Mr. Prasad continued to look at it with distaste. "Why don't you leave it in the lab?" he demanded.

"Not 'it', Sir. 'Him'. He has a name, Jaisimha." Noticing the annoyed look on Mr. Prasad's face, Mani hastened to add, "Mr. Dias hadn't come in the morning, before Assembly. I don't want to give Jaisimha to anyone else."

"Hm...." said Mr. Prasad. "Very well. You may leave it here, at this corner." He pointed to a corner behind him. "I don't

want you to be distracted."

Mani had no choice but to leave Jaisimha at the specified corner. However, the result was the reverse of what Mr. Prasad had anticipated: now the whole class could see Jaisimha and no one paid attention to what he was teaching.

In the course of the next two hours, Jaisimha travelled back and forth, as each master discovered the tadpole's presence and, with a curious lack of originality, ordered the bottle to be placed at the same corner. Invariably, they regretted this decision, as the boys were more interested in the tadpole afterwards. Only the History master, Mr. Hari Ram, handled the situation well.

"Don't you think he should be taken to the lab to be introduced to Mr. Dias?" he asked, on discovering the tadpole under Mani's desk.

"Mr. Dias hasn't come yet, Sir," said Mani.

"Ah, yes... he is coming a little late today... Hm. Well, I don't enjoy teaching tadpoles. He goes to the lab... NOW!"

Mani went to the lab with Jaisimha. The lab, surprisingly, was empty. Even the attendant, who normally pottered around, was absent then. Mr. Hari Ram would not take it kindly if Mani dawdled. But Mani did not want to leave the bottle on the table without informing anyone. There was only one thing he could do and he did it. He opened a cupboard and deposited Jaisimha amidst other bottles containing various solutions.

After History class came the lunch hour, and Mani and Arvind sped to the lab to retrieve Jaisimha. They almost knocked down Mr. Dias, who was coming out just then.

"Now, what do you think you are doing?" Mr. Dias demanded.

"We've come for Jaisimha, Sir," said Mani with a grin on his face. The grin became wider as he saw Mr. Dias's confusion. "Our tadpole, Sir," he explained. "We've named him 'Jaisimha'."

Mr. Dias brightened immediately. "You caught a tadpole? Why, that is very good, indeed. Enterprise, that is what is needed. Now, where is it?"

"I left him here, Sir—in this cupboard," said Mani and opened the door. "Why!! He isn't here!" he exclaimed in dismay. "Maybe I left him here." He opened another cupboard only to dart back to the first for a closer inspection.

"That is enough!" said Mr. Dias, who had been watching Mani jump here and there, with disapproval on his face. "It is not funny. You may leave the lab.... No...I do not wish to hear you. I told you to GO!" he roared.

Mani's classmates greeted the news of Jaisimha's disappearance with concern.

"Where could he have gone?" they wondered.

"I say! What is the matter!" Sridhar enquired, as he sauntered by.

"It's Jaisimha! He's missing!" said Mani and went on to recount all that had happened.

"You know," said Sridhar thoughtfully, "some papers flew from Mr. Prasad's desk and I went to the corridor to bring them back. I saw Vijay through the lab window. He was holding a bottle in his hand. Of course, it could be a specimen...but.... and we all know what Vijay is like...."

Indeed, they all knew what Vijay was like. He was in the 8th and was always getting into some scrape or the other—sometimes unintentionally, but only sometimes.

"That was after the fourth period?" Prakash asked.

"Yes, it was," Sridhar replied.

In a matter of minutes, the boys from the ninth had pinioned Vijay.

"What did you with my tadpole?" Mani demanded.

"Who wants your smelly tadpole? I can catch twenty!" Vijay bragged and tried to break away.

"Oh, no, you can't go," they held him firmly. "What did you do with our Jaisimha?"

Vijay laughed—or pretended to laugh. "Jaisimha...ha ha ha. Don't you know Simha is a lion and not a frog? Mandooka, for your information, is a frog!"

But the ninth standarders were unmoved by the dig. They all looked menacingly at Vijay. Meanwhile, other boys had come to

see what was happening and the eighth standarders pitched in to help Vijay.

"Why don't you fight someone your size?" said one.

"They can't, don't you know, stupid?" said another.

"Poor things. Thirty of them, and they can catch only one tadpole! Naturally they are upset...." taunted another.

Before they knew what was happening, the two classes grouped themselves against each other and a shouting match began as each side taunted the other. The other boys cheered lustily and then, suddenly, Mani and Vijay were fighting with their fists. Chaos reigned for the next few minutes until they heard the warning cry "Uncle Joel"

By the time, the Headmaster, Mr. Dayal (known as Uncle Joe by the boys for countless years and for reasons lost to time) came, bearing down upon them. Some measure of order had been restored. But Mani's shirt had no button near the collar, and Vijay's hair looked as if an egg-beater had run through it.

"What is all this?" demanded Mr. Dayal.

"It is about my tadpole. Vijay took him!" Mani accused.

"I did not," Vijay protested.

"Sridhar saw you with him in the lab."

"What was it doing in the lab?" asked Mr. Dayal.

"I kept him in one of the cupboards to show Mr. Dias afterwards."

"And where did Sridhar see it?"

"In the lab, Sir," said Sridhar hesitantly.

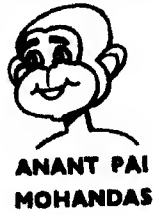
"I mean, I didn't see the tadpole clearly—but the bottle was not the kind we have in the lab. It was more like a jam bottle, shape and size. And, so, I just thought....." he swallowed with effort.

Vijay looked embarrassed. "I looked at it to see what it was. But I put it back. Honestly, I did. Mr. Raghunandan told me to bring hydrochloric acid from the lab, and when I opened the cupboard, I saw this bottle. I just looked to see what it was, that is all."

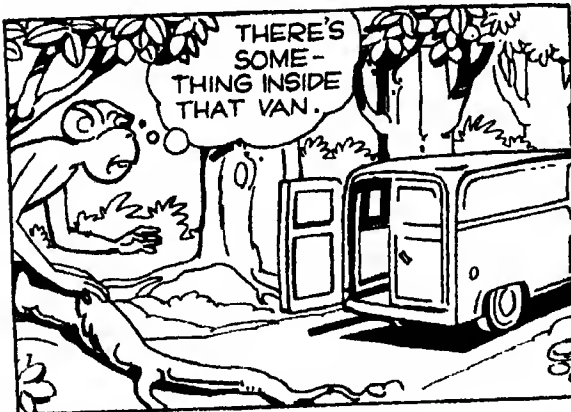
Mr. Dayal looked at the boys. "Mani and Vijay, come to my room. The others may go

(Turn to page 29)

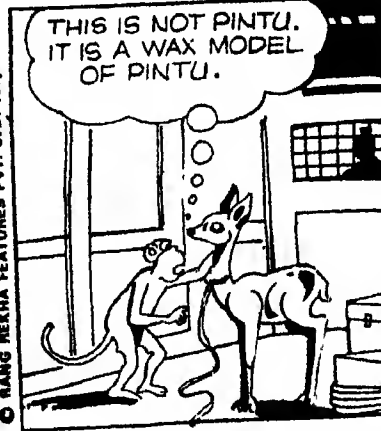
KAPISH

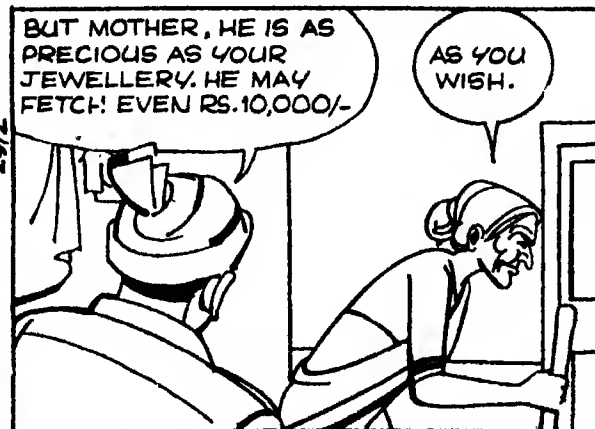
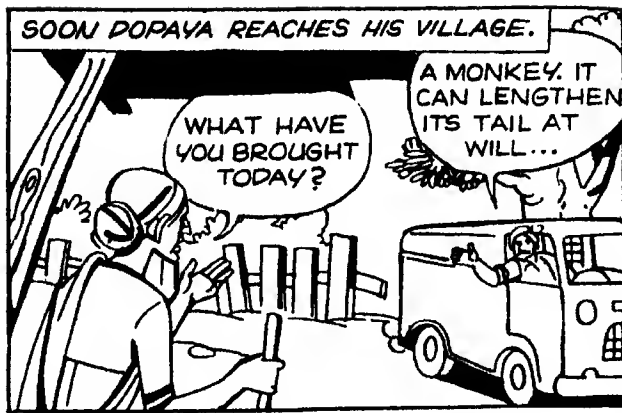
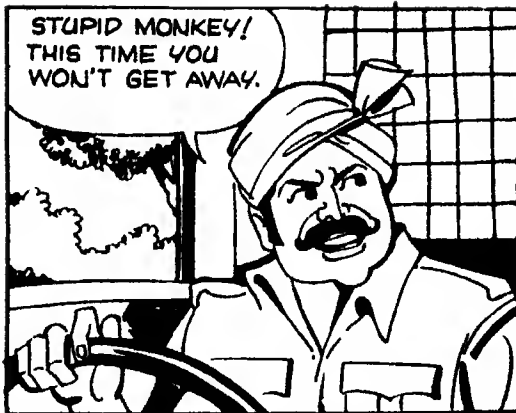


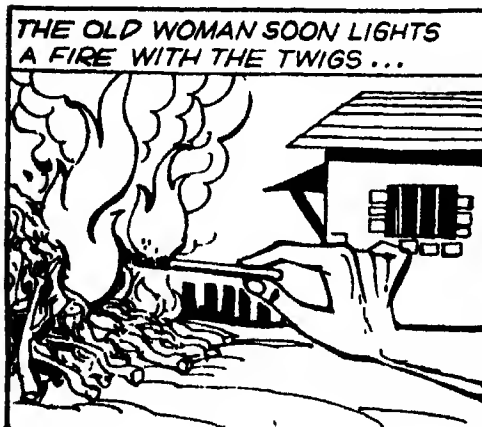
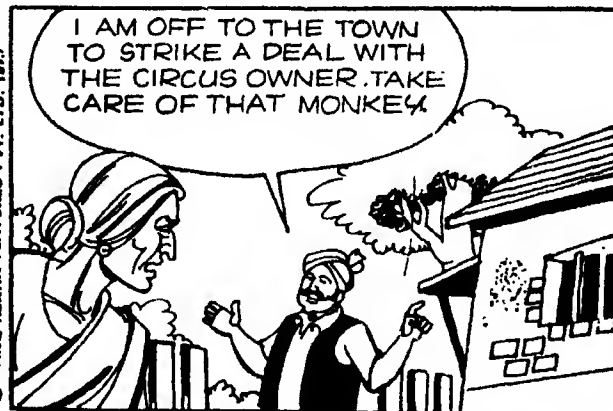
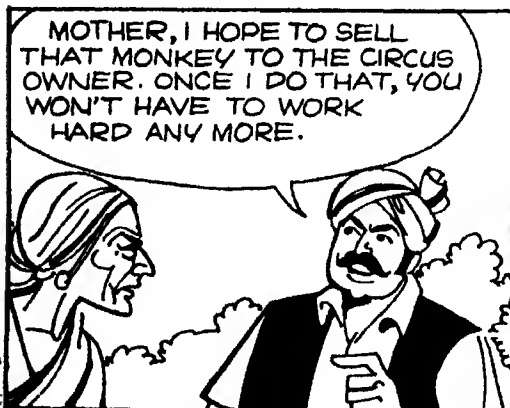
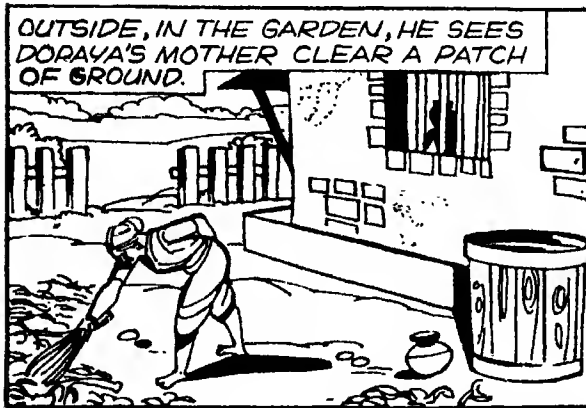
WHILE HOPPING HIS WAY TO A RELATIVE'S HOUSE ON A TREE-TOP, KAPISH SUDDENLY STOPS.



BUT AS SOON AS KAPISH ENTERS THE VAN —



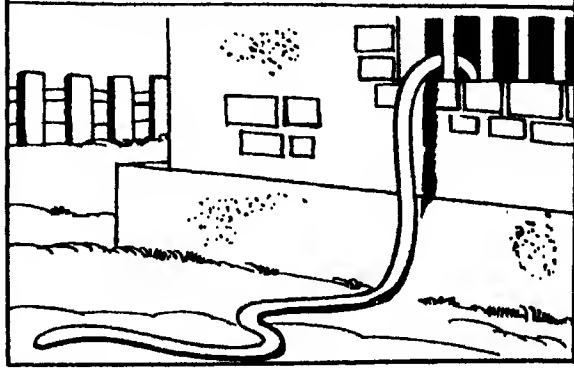




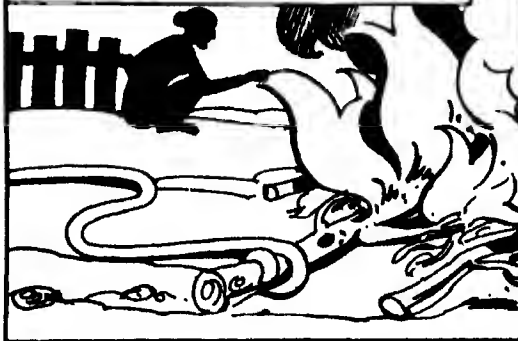
KAPISH LENGTHENS HIS TAIL ...



... AND OUT IT GOES INTO THE YARD...



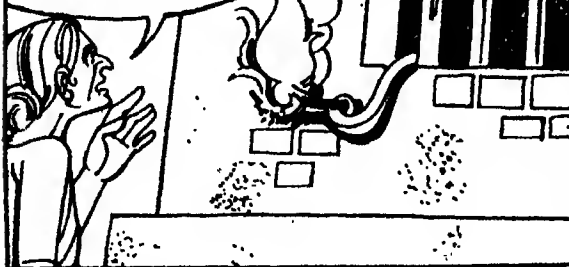
...AND GRABS A BURNING TWIG WITH THE TAIL-END.



HEY, WHAT'S HAPPENING?



HEY! MY VALUABLES!
MY VALUABLES
ARE IN THAT
ROOM. I MUST
SAVE THEM.

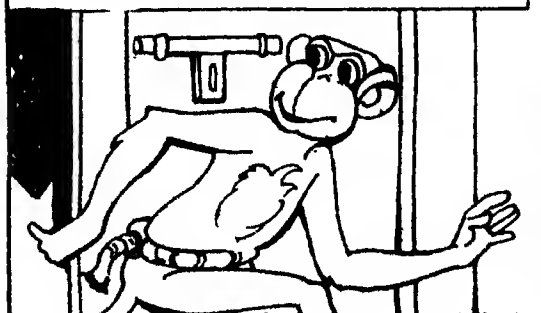


SHE UNFASTENS THE BOLT AND
RUSHES INTO THE ROOM.

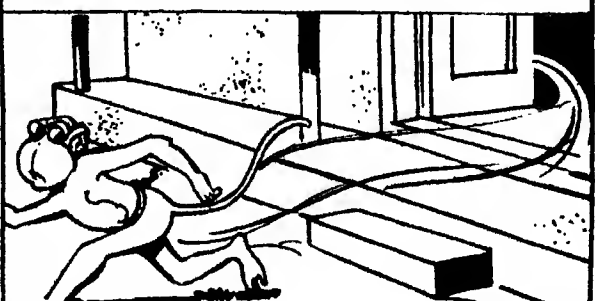
I MUST EXTINGUISH THAT BURNING TWIG QUICKLY,
BEFORE ANY
DAMAGE IS
DONE.



WITH THE HELP OF THE BURNING
TWIG, KAPISH HAS ALREADY
BURNT OUT THE ROPE BY WHICH
HE HAD BEEN TIED UP.



HE NOW SEIZES THE OPPORTUNITY TO
RUN OUT THROUGH THE DOOR ...



...TO THE SAFETY OF
THE JUNGLE.

THE END

A STRANGE ENCOUNTER

It all began when 13-year-old Vineet felt that he was already familiar with the holiday home where he had accompanied his Auntie and Uncle and their two sons, Madan and Tubby. As their car slowly climbed up to the Kasauli hill that evening, he had started recognising certain landmarks. In fact, he even guessed correctly the presence of a 'big ugly cactus round the next corner'. Uncle was prompted to ask him whether he had been up there earlier. Vineet shook his head, but he could not shake off the uneasy feeling that had struck him. They parked the car half-furlong away from the house and, carrying their boxes, entered the front door. And Vineet felt his heart thudding...

After unpacking and setting up their rooms, the older boys moved to the backgarden where they found Tubby sitting on the grass in the company of his woolly elephant Boogle, and straining to catch a clump of red wild flowers on the edge of the hill falling in a precipice barely a yard away from a rickety wooden fence. Vineet realised that one had only to cross that one yard, to step off into space as it were! He thought he heard the echo of a faint scream rising in the air as a body floated down, down...

He checked Tubby from leaning against the insecure fence, and then they all went inside at the threat of imminent rain. Madan was late in joining them at the dining table. He told Vineet the story of an accident he heard from the chowkidar — of a child falling over the precipice 20 years ago. At the instance of Uncle, Vineet went up to close the windows in their rooms to prevent rain from getting inside. While there, he heard Madan calling out for Tubby. The chowkidar's story was whirling in his mind, and the uneasy feeling came back to him. Auntie's alarmed voice then floated up the stairs: "Tubby, Tubby!"

Now read on...

"**H**E'S here, Mummy," Vineet heard Madan shouting. "He was hiding in the sideboard."

"Tubby, you're really naughty, giving me a fright like that!" Auntie was saying. "What were you doing in the sideboard?"

"Was telling Boogle a ghost story," Tubby's shrill voice rose to a wail. "Mummy, Madan Bhaiyya is pulling my arm!"

"Madan, let's play Conquest," Vineet said, coming downstairs. The clanging inside his head had faded, and he felt stiff.

The game kept them both absorbed. Concentrating on his 'armies', now retreating, now advancing on the map of the world, Vineet was only half aware of the activities around him.

The rain had stopped and Auntie had gone upstairs to put Tubby to bed—a Tubby who sobbed and struggled, because Uncle had just stopped him from trying to pluck the red flowers that grew at the edge of the hill.

"Want flowers for Boogle! Where's my Boogle? WHERE'S MY BOOGLE?" Tubby was screaming. "Don't want to sleep."

The soothing murmur of Auntie's voice went on and on. Tubby quietened.

Auntie came downstairs, just as Madan sat back and groaned, "I've lost again!" He pulled a face.

Vineet's head was throbbing and the sick feeling was back in his throat. He felt a cool hand on his forehead. Auntie was bending over him. She straightened. "Off to bed, both of you. No arguments. Go on, I'll bring you some hot milk before you sleep."

Vineet followed a yawning and stretching Madan up the stairs. He was still awake when Auntie came in with the milk. The last thing he knew before he drifted away into sleep was her cool hand gently pressing his aching forehead.

Vineet felt he was floating up, up into the cold night sky, just above the house. He tried to fly higher, to get away, but the house sucked him down remorselessly. He kept looking up into the darkness and the faint glimmering of a single star. He knew if he looked down, he would be lost. The house would clutch him, dominate him, draw him down, pull him nearer and nearer to the edge...

He looked down. He couldn't help it. The house pulled at him fiercely. Gasping for breath, he steadied himself in the air with a tremendous effort. He could see a small figure, racing round and round the

house, stumbling and laughing and running again. Once past the wooden fence which swayed back and forth in the breeze. A second time, round and round.

"No! Stop!" Vineet screamed. But a mounting horror told him that the little figure couldn't hear. Round the house a third time, stumbling against the fence, the loud crack of wood breaking, and then a terrified scream that came again and again and again...

Tearing through the nightmare, Vineet woke up suddenly. He sat up. His mouth was dry. His heart was pounding urgently. His eyes went towards the door and the room beyond. Moonlight lay on the two beds inside. Vineet could see Madan's tousled hair on the pillow. But Tubby's bed was empty.

Vineet threw back his blanket and scrambled out of bed. He stood for a minute, uncertain; then some impulse made him turn to the windows overlooking the back garden. His heart missed a beat! Moonlight illuminated Tubby's small figure pressed against the fence near the slump of red flowers, his arms wrapped around something.

"Tubby!" Vineet shouted, wrenching open a window. Then he was running down to the back door, his bare feet cold on the wooden stairs. He found the back door unlocked and ajar. A stool stood beside it. Vineet ran into the cold clear moonlit night.

The wooden fence, still wet from the rain, glistened in the moonlight. And there was Tubby—straining against it, holding Boogle out towards the wild flowers. Boogle's trunk was only inches away from the bright red cluster. The old fence groaned.

"Tubby!" Vineet shouted again, and raced towards him. Crrr! The rotting wood cracked under Tubby's weight. He lost his balance and fell, while Boogle went bumping down the hillside, as the little boy's fingers scrambled frantically for a hold on the stony hillside.

For a split second of horror, Vineet was paralysed. The loose stones beneath Tubby slithered and moved forward, dropping over the edge of the precipice. Then, in an instant, Vineet had Tubby by the legs, pull-

ing him back to safety.

"Boogle!" Tubby sobbed. "My Boogle's fallen down and hurt himself."

"Boogle's all right," Vineet tried to console him, "he's made of cloth. He can't get hurt. I'll go and get him, Tubby. Don't cry." He hugged the squirming figure tightly, his eyes rooted to the fence where it hung limp and broken.

Then, suddenly, he heard voices. Auntie, Uncle and Madan were there. Gently, Auntie took Tubby from Vineet's grasp. Tears were running down her cheeks as she kissed the bruised hands Tubby held out to her plaintively. Soothing him with promises of finding Boogle by the time he woke up, Auntie took him into the house.

Vineet realized that his legs were trembling. If Uncle's arm had not been around him, he would have sunk right there on the grass.

"Tubby must have woken up and missed Boogle," Uncle was saying. "I think he was left outside when Tubby went to bed. My God, if you hadn't reached in time, Vineet," he shook his head as if to chase away thoughts too horrible even to imagine.

"Mummy and Daddy heard you shouting to Tubby, and then I woke up and went downstairs," said Madan in an excited voice, as they walked back slowly to the house. "Bhaiyya, you saved Tubby's life! You're a hero! Daddy should give you a reward!"

"Don't be silly, Madan," Vineet laughed shakily.

"Gosh! I'll never be able to sleep tonight!" Madan remarked.

Vineet felt the same, as he shuffled deep into his blanket a little later. Auntie and Uncle had just left the room. Auntie had sat with her arms around him—she had kept wiping away her tears, much to Vineet's embarrassment! Uncle told him he would look for another house the next day. "Where you and Madan and Tubby can play without fear," Auntie had added. "We'll forget about today and start our holiday from tomorrow, okay?"

"That'll be nice," Vineet thought and yawned. He was sleepy, after all!

Anupa Lal

(Concluded)

(Continued from page 22)

back to their classes."

With that, Mr. Dayal went swiftly to his room. Mani and Vijay followed him with sinking hearts.

"Mani," said Mr. Dayal in his room, "you must apologize to Vijay. He did not take your tadpole. I know where it is. And let this be a lesson to you not to jump to conclusions!"

"But somebody must have taken it, Sir. Who did?" Mani said stubbornly.

"I did," said Mr. Dayal.

"Oh!" said both boys awed.

"First, the apology," Mr. Dayal prompted.

Mani apologized handsomely and Vijay smirked happily. It was somewhat unusual for him to be given an apology. It was generally the other way round. But he managed to receive the apology with grace.

"You see," Mr. Dayal explained, "I was coming down from the first floor. There is a point on the stairs from where you can see through the lab window. I saw Vijay looking at the bottle and then glance around quietly before putting it back. I thought Vijay was up to one more prank, so I confiscated the bottle. Here you are!" He dug into the depths of his drawer and handed the bottle over to Mani, with a flourish.

Jaisimha flipped his tail and dived downwards while the water swirled around him. Mani and Vijay looked on Jaisimha's antics with unabashed wonder.

"I tried feeding him with some biscuit crumbs. I trust it won't upset his delicate digestion," Mr. Dayal said and laughed nervously.

"Thank you, Sir!" said both boys together and escaped hastily from Mr. Dayal's presence.

Mani got all the lavish praise he had anticipated from Mr. Dias in much the same words as he had imagined. The 9th standard quoted and requoted Mr. Dias on catching tadpoles, not only to their own merriment, but also to that of the whole school.

Jaisimha was a coveted attraction until he grew to be a frog. Then, like all mothers

the world over, Mani's mother insisted that she wouldn't have a frog in the house. Nobody else's mother would have a frog either. So the 9th standard made the best of it.

They had a nice send off party for Jaisimha near a pond. He was fed on a few insects and then released into the water, accompanied by the blaring of toy horns and the hooting of whistles. Jaisimha leapt joyfully into the pond to join his kith and kin, while his erstwhile friends made their way back home, making plans for catching a rat the next time.

Subhadra Krishnamurthy

THE FOREST

As I looked out of my window
I saw the forest glow,
The silence was broken by the breeze
And the whispering of the trees

The forest wearing a beautiful green dress
To show the world new forms of loveliness,
Sturdy oaks touch the sky,
Different birds go flying by.

This is the place for birds
to sing

And sweeten the beautiful scent the flowers
bring

This is the place to sit under
trees

And to discover Truth and
Peace

*Alpana Ansal (12)
India*

PEN-FRIENDS CORNER together with
Enrolment Coupon will appear next
month.

RAMU IN ORBIT

THE STORY SO FAR

The sylvan meadows of Ootacamund, in Tamilnadu, cradling in the lush green Nilgiri mountains, suddenly echoed an alarm. It was the summer of 2077. "Bleep! Bleep!" The radio-telescope there had picked up some strange signals. The control room soon hummed with people. They found the signals unique. Other tracking stations in India and elsewhere were alerted. The giant telescope at Kavalur spotted something strange in the skies. The object was seen orbiting Mars. But two days later, it just disappeared! Then, suspense for four long days. Once again, it was Kavalur—spotting a star in broad daylight. Was it really a star? Wasn't it looking like a spaceship? Wasn't it resembling a star-fish?

While scientists agitatedly debated the nature of the satellite, a strange phenomenon was noticed in the Gold Fields of Kolar. The gold deposits there showed some 'signatures', presumably left by cosmic rays. Adding to the suspense was some intriguing radio noise. Was the doomsday approaching? Was the alien spacecraft in trouble? Or was it poised for an attack? The conclusion, in simple terms, was that the unusual signals meant a message for man, and perhaps the satellite was waiting for an answer. The Indian satellite 'Rohini', which had selected an elongated orbit, flashed a series of messages declaring friendship and offering any help that might be required. For some time, the spaceship went silent. Then, oddly, it began repeating the signals from Rohini!

The Rohini Mission Control reported a queer behaviour of the oscillograph. The computer printout showed new codes. When

decoded, the message urged a "meeting" 1,410,000 km away from the earth! An urgent world conference in Sriharikota decided on a rendezvous with the aid of a reusable space shuttle. It was also decided to first send a robot for obtaining as many clues as possible about the alien ship. The robot was soon ready as a result of international effort and was sent up. An analysis of the mass of data sent by the robot confirmed the desire of the alien spacecraft, now named 'Trivikrama', for a meeting with those who controlled the earth satellite. Preparations were then launched for sending a team of men and women.

Twenty scientists, including four women, soon went aboard 'Cauvery' for the rendezvous with the alien ship. The international team was led by Captain Venkatesh. Cosmonaut Ramu, his wife Anju, also a spacewoman, and navigator Padma made up the other Indian members.

While in 'parking orbit', Cauvery received the message that 'Trivikrama' had moved away without any warning. Were they to de-orbit, asked Venkatesh. Was the adventure in space to be called off? wondered scientists on earth. While they debated the pros and cons, on the third day, Cauvery got the warning of a solar flare. The crew and the Mission Control then conjectured the reason why the alien craft had moved away to avoid being caught in the solar flare—a clear indication of superior intelligence. The spotting of the retro-fire of Trivikrama brought in some hope of a rendezvous.

Now read on.

5. RAMU ENTERS TRIVIKRAMA

THE great rendezvous began. A relay of satellites picked up the signals and transmitted them to Mission Control. Eight nations sent separate observation satellites. They were ordered not to attempt a rendezvous, as too many approaching satellites might mislead the alien craft as an offensive gesture.

Only when Cauvery neared Trivikrama, the alien craft's dimensions became clear. It was a huge complex, 500 km long and

cylindrical in shape, with a diameter of 50 km in the middle. With several concentric giant tubes encompassing it, the complex resembled a spiral galaxy.

The high-gain antenna—a huge dish surrounded by helical structures—was oriented towards the earth. The television signals were sent from the spacecraft to ground stations at Mauritius, the Minicoy Islands, and Kourou, where they were converted to commercial frequencies for release to

public television sets. A station on the moon also processed the signals. The reception there was a shade better, as there was no atmosphere surrounding it.

Captain Venkatesh inspected the ship closely during the rendezvous. Except for a few gaping black holes, which seemed to have been closed, there were no equipment like a docking probe. No one was willing to hazard a guess as to whether any living being was inside. Immediate docking was ruled out by the skipper. Mission Control agreed with him and decided to wait and proceed with the programme decided earlier.

Mission Control began to read out a series of numbers, which were code words for starting a series of actions. First, a huge screen unfurled itself aboard Cauvery. A film on the evolution of life on the earth was screened. After 30 minutes of a grand portrayal, everyone eagerly looked forward to some sort of reaction from the aliens. There was none.

Unmindful of the result, Mission Control flashed the message to go ahead with the programme. The celestial screen showed the great works of art in the world. The paintings of Ajanta, the rock temples of Mahabalipuram, the works of Botticelli and Leonardo da Vinci, the construction of the pyramids and Abu Simbel were some of the items displayed in vivid colour. There was again no response.

Then came pictures of the world's peoples, from all continents, in their colourful attire—all ending in gestures of welcome and smile. Numbers, binary numbers, some alphabets, symbols of mathematics, physics and chemical numbers were also flashed on the screen.

The last portion of the film showed illustrations of fire, air, and water and how they are used on the earth. Still there was no reaction.

Mission Control decided to wait. If some photocopying device of the alien craft had registered the images, it was but natural to give it some time to process it and make some meaning of the data. In fact, some young scientists protested that man had given an over-dose of data to an alien sys-

tem, without any knowledge of its capacity to digest them.

After one earth day of waiting without any response, Mission Control gave them the go-ahead for a spacewalk and entry into Trivikrama, if possible.

Cosmonauts Ramu and Anju were ordered to don their spacesuits and get ready for the mission. A series of checks began. It was first verified if any electricity or rays were to be found. Special sensors scanned the surface for possible traps. Some bolts and nuts were directed to hit the surface, to see whether they would cling to it. They did not. The distance between the two craft was only 2 km. The very fact that the two coexisted for over 48 hours was considered unique.

The historic spacewalk began. The adventurous couple outside Cauvery were televised to the earth. Millions sat glued to the sets, as their forefathers did over a century before, watching man's first moon landing.

It was agreed to give Anju the honour of first stepping on an alien craft. It was a date with destiny. Despite all possible precautions, anything might happen to the lonely two. Death-rays might suddenly sprout out. Or the black holes on the surface might suck the couple into seemingly bottomless pits.

Tethered to the mothercraft, Anju grasped a bolt-like gadget and stood on the hull of Trivikrama, smiling. Within minutes, the smile was spread over the world's television screens. Ramu soon joined her. The couple and the crew on board Cauvery exchanged greetings.

Then started the hard climb. Unlike the weightless environment, there was artificial gravity on board Trivikrama. Perhaps, there was some sort of machinery to create it.

The cosmonauts, long accustomed to zero-g, felt quite uneasy, as if suddenly they were quite tiring. They plodded on only to find emptiness everywhere. They knocked all doors but with no reply.

At one place, Anju was dumb-struck. She peered into a small hole and could not believe her eyes. A sophisticated array of instrument panels and gauges was visible. Several hundreds of digits were rolling up

and down in several gadgets. A myriad of small lights flicked on and off. Elsewhere, graphs were rising and falling on small panels.

Anju got permission from Cauvery to shout through the hole with the help of an electronic gadget to amplify her voice. "Is there any one up there? You are welcome! Please answer," she yelled at the top of her voice. It was quite a relief for her, after hours of silence.

No one expected an answer, but some thought there might be some echo at least. There was none. The time to end the first extra-vehicular activity had come. Casting lingering glances at the seemingly endless pathways of electronic gadgetry, Anju fired the little rockets strapped to her to float back to Cauvery. Ramu stayed on for a while, to deposit the films and cassettes in a secure place in the hope that some day they would be seen by intelligent beings.

The close-up photographs taken by Anju and Ramu were carefully studied on board Cauvery. The mystery of Trivikrama deepened. Some people thought that there were living beings inside but did not dare to surface, after knowing the capacity of the human beings. Some others held that the aliens were in deep sleep. Their hibernation would perhaps end, only if their computers demanded it, after carefully analysing the data.

Anju remembered vividly that a prominent dial on board Trivikrama showed the number 237, which stayed on while other numbers changed. She could not resist the inference that the number may stand for minus 237 degrees centigrade, which is the temperature of absolute zero on the earth. Perhaps, the aliens were in deep freeze, as it would be necessary to lower the body temperature in order to stand prolonged hibernation.

The cosmonauts were, however, warned of the dangers of disturbing the scheme of things. A group of biologists cautioned that if the beings were woken up at random, there was no guarantee that their brain would have kept pace with the body. That might result in crazy behaviour on the part of the aliens. And that would be the least desirable development.

On board Cauvery, Venkatesh ordered the display and transmission of numerals, which were repeated indefinitely. The seven colours of the rainbow were produced on a big scale.

While there was no visible response, the extraordinary radio watch of Cauvery's delicate instruments noted that whenever there was a change of display or messages, there were synchronous broadcasts from Trivikrama. This was too much of a coincidence. Were the messages being transmitted to some master craft, controlling the alien-probe?

Mohan Sundara Rajan

(To be continued)

THE FIRST ELECTRIC TRAIN

THE world's first electric locomotive was designed by the German scientist, Werner von Siemens. It was shown at an international trade exhibition in Berlin in 1879. A special track was built for the locomotive, which hauled up to thirty visitors at a time around the exhibition.

One of the earliest electric railways in England was Volk's Electric Railway, built along the sea-front at Brighton. This railway was opened in 1883. It was a marvellous holiday attraction at that time, and is still very popular with visitors to the seaside town.

The first electric trains to be used as a serious means of transport appeared on the London Underground in 1890.

The building of longer distance electric railways began after the First World War.

*Lalita Shrimal
India*

HOW and WHY

Aparna Krishnan, New Delhi, asks:

The stars sometimes collide against each other. Is there any danger of the Earth getting disturbed?

Collision of stars is an extremely rare event. If perhaps a shooting star phenomenon is being referred to, then it is well to know that shooting stars are mere particles, often no larger than a pebble or a grain of sand, flying into the atmosphere with speeds as high as 45 miles a second. Friction will generate heat and it will appear as a flash across the sky, a momentary streak of light.

Now, actual star collisions, though highly unlikely, are still possible. Great distances separate stars. On the average, there is a star four light years away from the next (1 light year is about 10^{13} km), and they move at speeds of the order of 10–100 km/sec. They do not move just anyhow like molecules of a gas, but generally partake of the revolution of the galactic disc. (The galaxy is rotating slowly, at the rate of once per 220 million years.) The fact that stars are not moving at random but somewhat like chains on a giant ferris wheel reduces the chances of their collision considerably. But even if stars were to move at random, then it can be shown that a star will collide with another only in 10^{20} years. The age of the universe itself is less than 10^{10} years! So you see, how unlikely this event is!

Such unlikely eventualities have been used, however, to explain the origin of the solar system. It was believed that a star came close to the sun producing a great tidal bulge of dense gases, protruding out in the general direction of the passing star.

Some of it fell back into the sun and some broke up into bits that condensed into planets and began rotating around the sun. The trouble with this theory, apart from being extremely unlikely, is that it does not

explain why all planets rotate around the sun in nearly one plane and in the same direction. Also, the regularity in planetary distances is unlikely to be accidental.

As to what effect a possible star collision might have on the earth—you can imagine the catastrophic changes knowing that even a small and far away body like the moon can raise tides. If a star were even to approach near our sun, all the planets will probably be knocked out of their orbits, and there might be shattering changes due to magnetic and gravitational field disturbances. Some scientists have even attributed such major events in the history of the earth like the great deluge, coming of the ice age, mysterious and catastrophic end of some early civilizations (for example, the middle kingdom of Egypt and Indus Valley civilization) to the passing of a huge comet between the earth and the moon. Even sunspots and flares are believed to cause subtle weather changes on the earth.

So, were we ever to witness an approaching star or watch our sun participate in a star collision, the results would be so catastrophic that they probably would not be very pleasant to know. I don't suppose it would matter anyway.

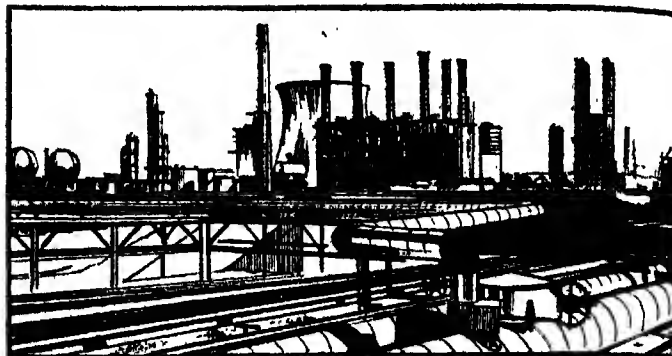
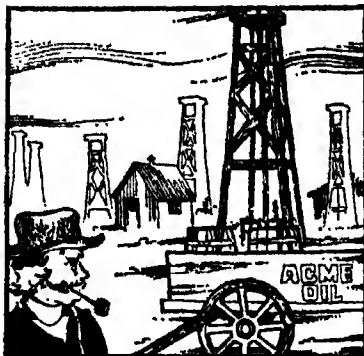
Meera Ramakrishnan

EXAMS A.B.C.

A Boy Could During Exams Fancy
Getting Himself Into Jumbles. Keeping
Loopholes Manoeuvred Neatly, Other
Puzzling Questions Require Smart Treatment;
Using Vagueness With Xylophonic
Youthful Zeal.

Saibal Chatterjee

Man Makes His World:

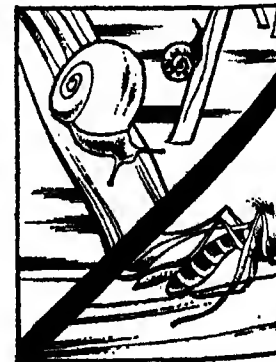
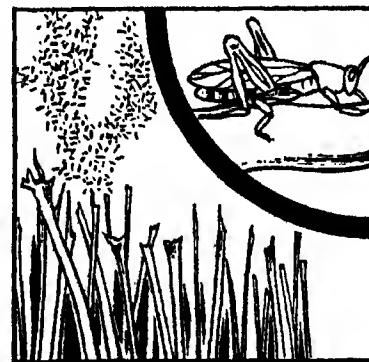
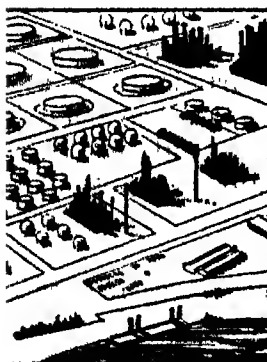


FOR 2,000 years, chemistry was mixed with magic by the alchemists trying to make gold or find the secret of eternal life. However, the industrial growth of recent times brought a more scientific approach. For example, coal was made to yield important chemicals. Then, from oil—in the past 45 years—has come a vast new range.

The first oil well in Pennsylvania in 1859 started the petroleum industry, but its oil was seen only as a source of kerosene (paraffin) to burn in lamps. Most of the gasoline (petrol) was burned off as waste until the motor car was invented. Even then, refining processes left by-products for which no use could be found.

In the 1930s, the search for ways of using these wastes was stepped up. As Britain and Western Europe built refineries for imported crude oil, they also joined hands in developing associated chemical production. Manufacture of chemicals is now Britain's second largest industry (after mechanical engineering), and it is still growing.

Crude oils are mixtures of hydrocarbons. Carbon forms many compounds with hydrogen, nitrogen, chlorine, and sulphur. A compound's nature depends on how its molecules are built up around carbon atoms. The chemist can now re-arrange these in ways which do not occur naturally to yield new chemicals.



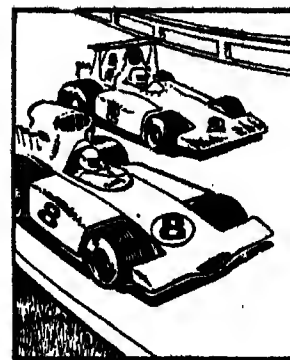
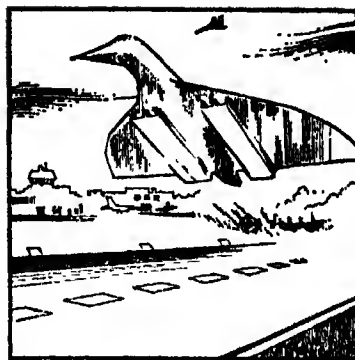
BASIC refinery processes break the hydrocarbons down to petroleum gases, gasoline, naphtha, kerosene, gas oil, lubricating oils, wax, fuel oil, and bitumen. Those most widely used as raw materials for the chemical industry are naphtha, waxes, and refinery gases. So far, around 15,000 useful compounds have been made.

Chemicals for food and health are vital to the world's increasing population. Increased food production depends on fertilisers. For these, ammonia—a nitrogen hydrogen compound—is essential. So, the oil industry takes its methane gas and splits off the hydrogen to provide a major raw material for fertiliser production.

Loss of crops due to pests and diseases is checked by manmade compounds of the industry. Control of desert locusts, one of the world's most destructive insects—threatening the food of more than 300 million people—was made possible by chlorinated hydrocarbons. Diseases in livestock are also being prevented by other new chemicals.

Health is also bettered in other ways. Bilharzia—an illness affecting millions—is carried by minute worms infesting water snails. A hydrocarbon carbamic acid compound has been found, which checks spread of the disease by killing the host snails. Deaths from malaria have been halved by oil-derived mosquito-killing chemicals.

Petrochemicals

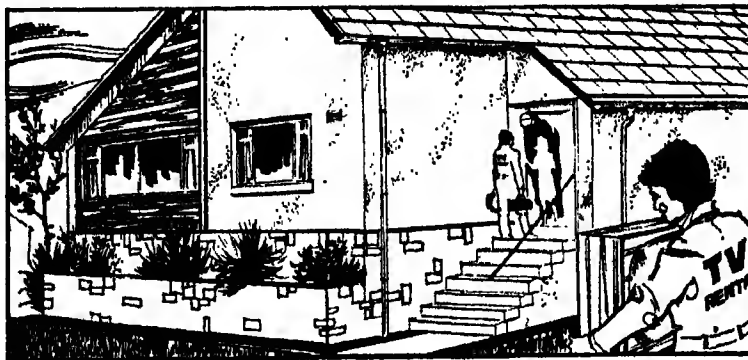


PETROLEUM-DERIVED solvents serve the cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries. Perfumes are extracted with them. Preparation of vitamins and hormones, too, uses solvents. Specialised forms are increasingly being used in hospitals for sterilising and disinfecting. Solvents are also needed for paints, polishes, and in dry-cleaning process.

A detergent is a cleansing agent. Soap made from animal fat or vegetable oils is one form. Acute shortages of the natural oils led the chemists to think of substitutes, and to make synthetic detergents. These are the powders used in homes for removing grease and dirt. They are also necessary for scouring natural fibres used in textiles.

There cannot be any more widely spread evidence of the chemists' importance than plastics, which they have made by rearranging the molecular structures of hydrocarbons. The clothes we wear, our houses, the food we eat, even the cars, trains, ships, or planes in which we travel owe part of their development to plastics.

Without plastics the evergrowing demand for material things could not be met. The natural rubber industry was unable to expand enough to meet the need for tyres. Natural fibres from sheep or cotton and other sources would not alone clothe the world's population. Trees could not be grown fast enough to replenish the demand for paper.



NYLON, through its use in stockings, was the first synthetic fibre to become a household word. Yet, starting with naphtha, the chemists made nylon a universal fibre material which serves for all clothes, furnishing fabrics, carpets, machine belting, tyre cords, and ropes of all kinds—on parachutes, down mines, or on ships.

Polythene—produced from ethylene gas—was first made for its electrical insulation properties. Now it appears as food wrapping, squeeze bottles, buckets, washbowls, and hospital equipment. Another 'polymer', PVC, gives floor tiles, guttering, and piping. Polystyrene and polypropylene figure in domestic appliances and furniture.

Although petrochemical products are used so often

in place of naturally-occurring substances, they are not inferior substitutes. Many are better than the materials they replace. They play a major role in raising the living standards of all peoples and advancing production efficiency helps to hold the costs down.

Today's skilled chemists does not give with one hand and take away with the other. He considers the effects of his new products on people and their environment. He ensures that his factory does not cause pollution. He tests his new chemicals carefully for their effects on human, animal, and plant life, before offering them to the world.

(Courtesy: BIS)

RANJI : "Prince of a Little State, King of a Great Game"

COLONEL His Highness Shri Ranjit-singhji Vibhaji Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, G.C.S.I., G.B.E. — to give the immortal 'Ranji' his full name and titles — captured the imagination of the cricketing populace in both England and Australia as few cricketers, if any at all, have done in the long history of the game. Only a whispered "Ranji is batting" sufficed to fill whole cricket grounds, for the high art of his batsmanship was not stuff that could be whipped up by any bread-and-butter batsman. It bore the unmistakable stamp of genius, deep study, and ceaseless practice, of varied and splendid talents, of uncanny gifts of eye, wrist and timing, all of which went into the furnishing of a wonderful batting mechanism.

Statistics — mere figures and decimal points — can never do Ranji justice. His batting was spontaneous, mercurial, alive to challenge and adventure, worthy to pillage and slaughter the finest bowlers on the most difficult wickets, and yet, in spite of the vast experimentation that he brought to bear, singularly solid and faultless in its execution. He improvised splendidly, but had he a mind to it, he would never have been dismissed, for bowlers even after years of hard trying could never find a chink in his armour.

Ranji scored 24,692 runs in first class cricket, with an average of 56.37, at the rate of 50 runs an hour throughout. In 15 Test Matches, he made 985 runs at 44.77, with two centuries. These are drab facts in themselves, though valued enough, but the magnetic appeal of his batting lay elsewhere. He could subjugate the best of attacks on the vilest surface by an exhibition of crisp, faultless batting, and while the rest were pottering about, unable to make any headway, Ranji, by audacious

stroke-play, would change the trend of play.

'Ranji' was born in Sarodar on September 10, 1872, and went to England for his education at the age of 16. In 1893, he earned his 'blue' at Cambridge, and two years later, became eligible to play for Sussex. His very first match was a great triumph : not only did he hit 77 not out and 150 in the two innings, but also took six wickets and held two catches. At the end of the season, he was placed fourth on the batting list, with 1,766 runs at 50 per innings.

There was no stopping him now, and he took great strides forward, finishing with 2,771 runs, including 10 centuries in the next season. Two (100 and 125 not out) came in the course of just ONE DAY in the match against champion county Yorkshire — a feat without parallel to this date.

Much more momentous than all this was Ranji's debut in Test cricket. In the first innings, he dazzled with 62 out of a total of 231, but even this effort pales into insignificance before the exquisite grandeur of his play in the second innings. Following-on 181 runs in the red, England lost four second innings wickets for 109 when the Prince entered the arena. Forthwith the flame of Earnest Jones' red hot pace paled its fires; the magic of Hugh Trumble's incisive off-spin disappeared on the face of batsmanship of a higher sort than any other living batsman could aspire to.

The next morning Ranji posted the first century before lunch in Test cricket and when the last English wicket fell, the young prince, making his bow in Test cricket, returned unconquered to the pavilion with 154 not out made in 190 minutes

— a brave and beautiful innings studded with 23 exquisitely struck boundaries, the majority of them hooked from the bowling of bouncer-happy Earnest Jones. This fusillade of strokes was virtually unbroken, as can be conjectured readily from the fact that he reached his first 50 in 75 minutes, his second in 50 minutes while the last 54 runs came in 55 minutes. Even to this distant date it remains one of the finest half-dozen innings in Test cricket.

Ranji topped the batting averages on both sides with 235 runs at 78.33, and at the end of the season he surged ahead of W.G. Grace's world record of 2,739 runs set way back in 1871 with an aggregate of 2,780 — a tally that took him to the top of the first class batting table.

Ranji undertook his only tour to Australia in the winter of 1897. He took that continent by storm with scores of 189, 64, and 112 in the State games, but these efforts seemed to have sapped his strength and stamina, with the result that he was taken ill just before the first Test and was to stand down. This gave rise to all sorts of uncharitable speculation and it was plainly hinted in the Australian press that Ranji had chickened out rather than face the high speed bowling of Earnest Jones, whom Ranji had branded a chucker in an earlier game.

Ranji's blue blood rose in revolt and his reposts settled all doubts : going in at No. 7 even with the fever still on him, he held the Sydney Cricket Ground in thrall for 215 minutes during which time he belted 175 brave runs, being particularly severe on Jones. Never has unfair calumny and invective been more promptly and effectively silenced. His consistent success and the unique quality of his batting art made him before long the darling of Australian crowds and so popular was he that, as a contemporary account puts it, "there were Ranjitsinghji matches, Ranjitsinghji sandwiches, Ranjitsinghji hair-restorers, bats and chairs"!

Ranji's prolificacy with the bat in first-class games astounded people who had yet to look askance at the fabulous and insatiable appetite of a Bradman or a

Hammond. In 1900, he became the first batsman to cross the 3,000-run mark in a season, averaging 87.57 with 11 centuries, which included five double-hundreds. The highest score of his career came a year later, and this Sussex v. Somerset encounter will go a long way towards displaying the absolute mastery that Ranji commanded over all bowling and over all conditions.

Batting first, Sussex collapsed for 236, Ranji accounting for 45. Somerset countered this with a massive 560 for 8 decl. Only one day being left, and with the match heading for a draw, the Sussex XI approached Ranji and suggested that he stay at the wicket for the whole of the third day and score 300 runs off his own bat. With Sussex 324 runs behind, Ranji fell in with the humour of the suggestion.

The Sussex captain could not sleep that night (he was a frequent prey to insomnia) and in the small hours of the morning went on a fishing expedition. Nevertheless, the score-board at the end of the day announced : Sussex 466 for 1, Fry 119 not out, Ranjitsinghji 285 not out! He could easily have reached his 300 runs had it not been for a shower that interrupted play for about a quarter of an hour. This, then, was the Ranji magic; this was the legerdemain that brought in thousands to the cricket grounds and sent them home content.

In 1904, Ranji left off playing regular first class cricket, but made a last appearance as late as 1920. On his retirement, A.G. Gardiner penned this moving tribute, which aptly sums up the emotions of the English cricketing populace towards a foreigner who gave them such unadulterated pleasure for so long and who opened their eyes to the effulgent beauty contained in correct and stylish batsmanship :

"The last ball has been bowled, the bats have been oiled and put away, and around Lord's the grand stands are deserted and forlorn. We have said farewell to cricket. We have said farewell, too, to cricket's king. The game will come again with the spring

and the new grass and the burgeoning trees. But the king will come no more...No more shall we see him tripping down the pavilion steps, his face wreathed in chubby smiles; no more shall we sit in the jolly sunshine through the livelong day and watch his incomparable art till the evening shadows

fall athwart the greensward and send us home content. The well-graced actor leaves the stage and becomes only a memory in a world of happy memories. And so 'hats off' to the Jam Sahib — the Prince of a little State, but the king of a great game."

Mahiyar Morawalla

SCHOOL FOR YOUNG SOCCER PLAYERS

BOYS in the Soviet Union, like in many other countries, are fond of soccer. In any courtyard, on a playground, at a stadium, fidgety boys can be seen kicking a leather ball from early spring till late fall. For everybody who likes soccer and is eager to master the techniques of this fascinating game, the sports schools and physical culture clubs are places where

they can be certain of a warm welcome.

There is a specialized soccer school for children and youth functioning in Moscow for more than two decades now. Every year, a new reinforcement comes to the school. At the entrance exams, trainers select the ablest. Sharpness, adroitness, coordination of movements, good physique are the obligatory conditions for admission to the school. And, certainly, the good progress made at a school providing general education is a must to enter the soccer school.

It is always tempting to reach big soccer, but it requires a lot of work, perseverance and discipline. In any weather, young soccer players can be seen at the Children's

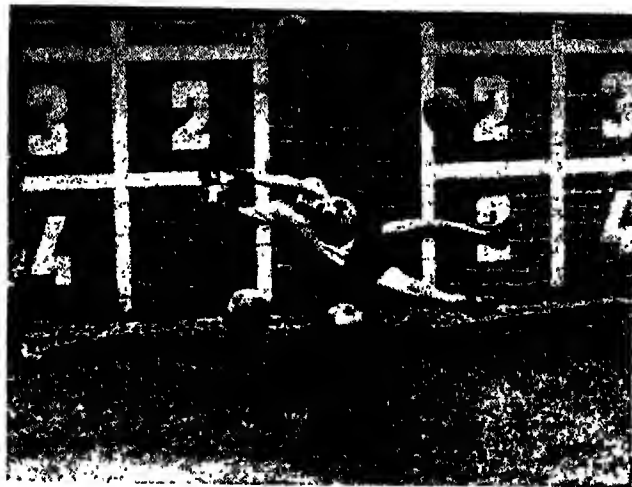


Pupils of the Moscow soccer school seen in action, at left and below



Corner of the Lenin Central Stadium in Moscow. During special lessons and training exercises, the boys learn all the tricks of the modern soccer. Besides this, track-and-field athletics, swimming, gymnastics, skiing, and skating offer great help in achieving high standards.

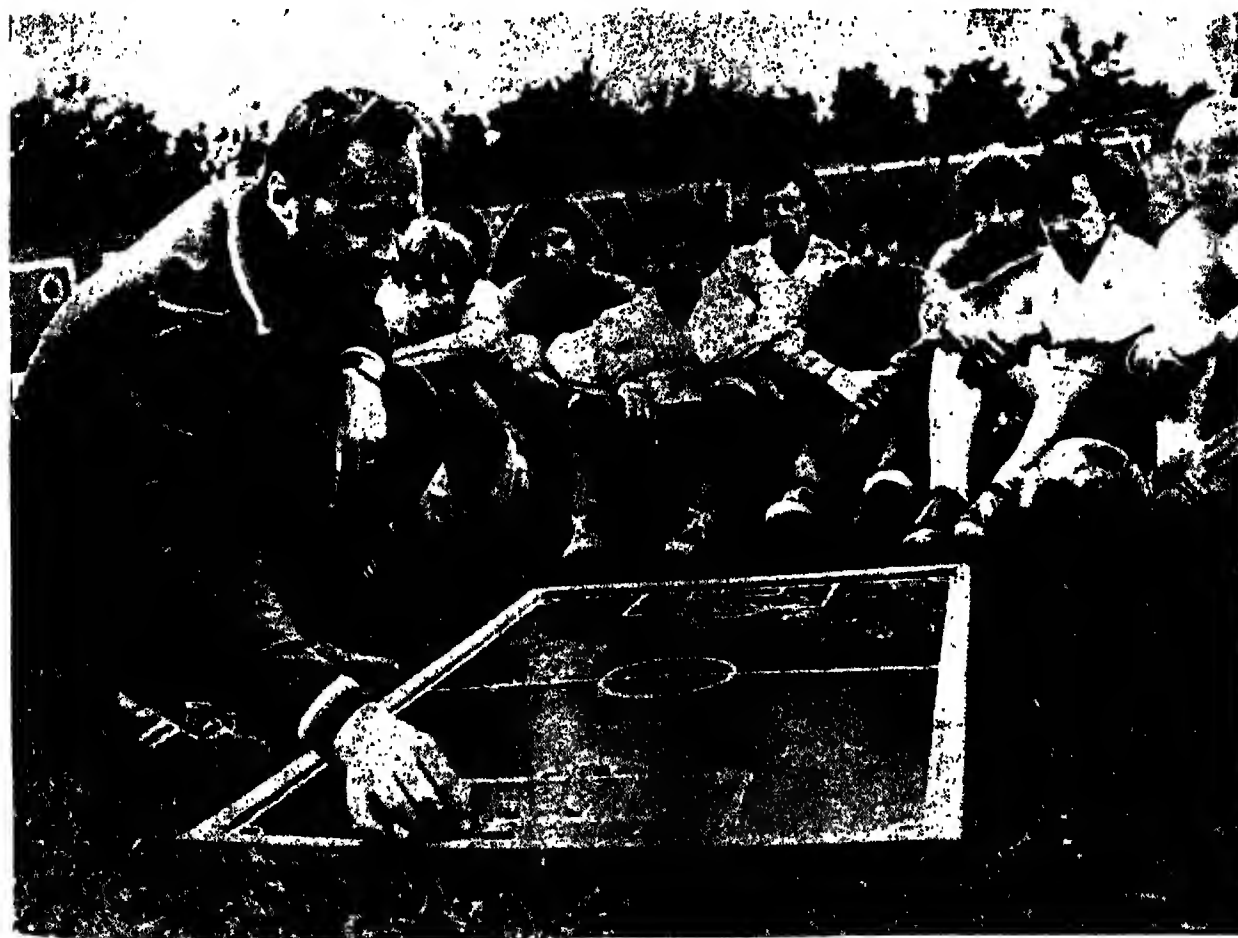
Two hundred boys study at the school at a time. From seven till 18 years of age, they are trained by experienced coaches and learn and practise everything about the game: to pass the ball accurately, to be able to observe the field, to defend and attack with lightning speed, and to learn how to play together and in coordination. And every boy dreams to emulate some of the well known ex-graduates of the school like Igor Chislenko, Gennady Logofet, Nikolai Manoshin, and Vladimir Fedotov, who have brought fame to Soviet sports and are known far beyond the borders of their motherland.



Above: It's a hard task for a goalie—he has to save six balls at a time!

Below: A senior coach of the soccer school, Oleg Lapshin, is discussing a game that has just ended.

(Courtesy: USSR Information Dept.)



Beatrice Webb

IT is amazing how the most unlikely families and homes produce some of the most remarkable personalities. The case of Beatrice Webb, the well-known socialist, is no exception.

Born in 1858, Beatrice was the eighth daughter of Richard and Laurencina Potter. The Potter household was a prosperous one. Mr. Potter inherited a large fortune to begin with and then went on to make a larger one as a railway magnate. His household consisted of his wife, nine daughters, a son Dicky (who died in infancy), two governesses, two nurses, servants in proportion, a large, well-appointed house, and innumerable visitors.

Beatrice, the future social reformer, grew up in this lap of luxury. There was rarely a month when there wasn't a birthday celebration in the house. The sisters would crown the birthday girl with flowers, and parade around the house, with the servants as the admiring audience. They were used to getting away with anything. They had cats and dogs as pets, even chickens, and went for elaborate picnics and read what they liked.

However, Beatrice was a lonely child in this crowd. Laurencina Potter doted over her only and short-lived son Dicky, and the household spoilt the ninth daughter, Rosy. Laurencina also had ambitions of becoming a novelist and used to write. She was, besides, an efficient and popular hostess to distinguished guests like Herbert Spencer.

Hence Beatrice always liked to spend her time roaming around in the woods or reading. All her thwarted love she showered on her "handsome, exuberant, extravagant" father and her pets. Richard Potter called her his "little Bee" and took her with him on his American tours. They were treated as VIPs because of his position, and she used to love every minute of it! Besides this, he was a great friend of his daughters and

would join in enthusiastically in all their games. When the daughters grew up, he treated them as equals and encouraged them to voice their opinions.

The daughters, especially Beatrice, found the variety of guests intellectually stimulating. Beatrice later wrote: "We lived in a perpetual state of ferment." For a growing child, it was a stimulating mental climate. According to her biographers, Kitty Mugeridge and Ruth Adam, Beatrice talked with guests with assurance, putting on "affected airs and a posturing manner" and perpetually showing off in an attempt to outshine her elder sisters.

Herbert Spencer, the Liberal philosopher, was an old friend of the Potters. A frequent visitor, he was a dominant influence on Beatrice. He trained her mind when she was a child and helped her form her thoughts when she was a young woman. He was a great favourite with the Potter girls, who agreed wholeheartedly with his axiom "*submission not desirable*" and his theory of "*education by the natural way*". They would go on nature rambles, hunting for fossils and plants and water beasts. Once the girls pelted him with leaves and threw him on the ground. He grumbled, but got scant sympathy from Mrs. Potter, who had disapproved of the freedom all along.

Nevertheless, he was very fond of all of them and with Beatrice, he established a special relationship, that later blossomed into a warm friendship and although in the end their views clashed, she never forgot her debt to him.

By the time Beatrice graduated from the nursery to the school-room, all her seven elder sisters—Lallie, Georgie, Mary, Maggie, Blanche, Theresa, and Kate—had finished school and were busy in matrimonial pursuits. So, the governess was dispensed with, and Beatrice started studying on her own, with occasional help from Herbert

Spencer. She proceeded with her usual zeal and industry and read everything she could lay her hands on. She studied French and German philosophy, the Bible, and the life of St. Paul. She loved Walter Scott, Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Fielding.

When her sisters, like the rich girls of the day, went up to London for the coming out season and to make their debut in society, Beatrice would go with them. While they were busy with balls, beaus and boudoirs, Beatrice would wheedle tickets for the Ladies Gallery out of the young men who came to court her sisters. While they were busy dancing, she would sit for hours in the House of Commons listening to the debates. Once she returned from Parliament in the early hours of the morning, hungry and tired.

Nonetheless, Beatrice also enjoyed her share of social engagements. At 16, she was beautiful and intelligent and had the satisfaction of turning partners away at every dance she attended. But back in the country, she became ill and morbid.

When 17, she was at a loose end. So, her parents sent her to an expensive finishing school in Bournemouth to restore her health and temperament. She was a misfit amidst the silly rich girls and could tolerate them only at a distance.

A popular pastime with the Potter girls was to hold communication with the invisible world in dark chambers. The sisters, except Beatrice, were credulous. She felt that it was rubbish and made their hands go to sleep and prick pins and needles!

The Potter girls were a sensation in London drawing-rooms. They were known as "strong-minded, blue-stockinged young ladies who could argue down the greatest arguer in the world".

Beatrice developed a lasting relationship with her sister Maggie, which was broken only when the latter got married. Then Beatrice and her mother realized, for the first time, the similarity of their problems of mental energy running to waste and a longing to do something with their lives. This laid the foundation of a warm relationship between them.

After her mother's death, Beatrice, as the eldest unmarried daughter, willingly started keeping house and looking after her father and Rosy. Her fame as a "blue-stockings" (intellectual woman) continued to grow, like her beauty. Yet she wasn't interested in marriage. She tried her hand at maths, but gave it up after brain fatigue. Her next interest was physiology, but she discovered her real vocation after reading Spencer's "*Social Statistics*". She then studied Karl Marx and published articles, like "*The Rise and Fall of English Economics*".

Her involvement in socialism continued to grow and she soon became a celebrity. So great were her convictions that she even refused a brilliant marriage with the Rt. Hon'ble Joseph Chamberlain, M.P. and ex-mayor of Birmingham, as his stand clashed with hers.

Her introduction to the Fabian Society, which was aspiring towards a socialist community, led to her association with Sidney Webb, Bernard Shaw, Graham Wallas, Sidney Oliver, and Annie Besant.

In 1891, Beatrice published her work on the Cooperative Movement. With her marriage to Sidney Webb the same year, began a 40-year happy partnership of mutual intellectual stimulation. Together they founded the London School of Economics, established the *New Statesman*, and carried out researches in the history of trade unionism, the Poor Law, and the Soviet Constitution.

Beatrice Webb's greatest public achievement was her work on the Royal Commission on the Poor Law, which sat from 1905-1909. Her minority Reports was the foundation stone of the welfare state. She had the satisfaction of seeing most of her ideas accepted in the Beveridge Report of 1942.

Even though Beatrice Webb died in 1943, this fascinating woman is acknowledged till today as a truly remarkable personality of modern times.

Sabina Valson

Puppets and Puppeteers

PUPPETRY was once mainly meant for children. It is now being increasingly used as stage play, for commercial advertisements, for education and instruction and for state propaganda. It is not merely an extension of pantomime but can admit of the most sophisticated techniques, and stylised theatre. It can train public servants and educate neo-literates. And yet it can maintain humour and satire.

In India puppets have been used as tools of education since the days of Emperor Ashoka. The Ashram Schools of ancient India had excelled in this kind of instruc-

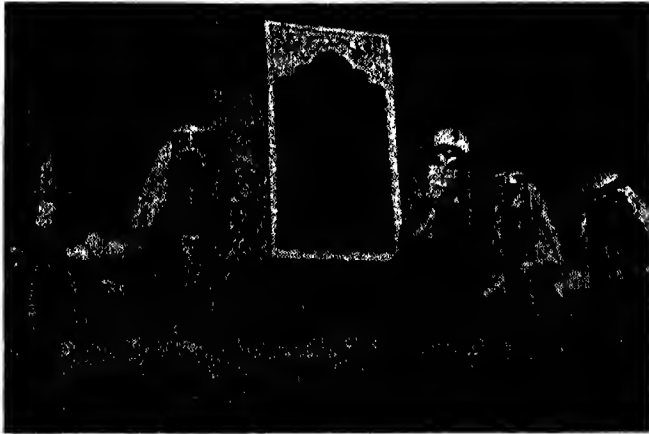
pation. In Javanese 'Wayang' (meaning puppet), even the end of a sock may be stuffed, painted, or embroidered to represent a head.

A puppet can be controlled from above, from below, and from the surface with hands, or with the help of wires, strings, or rods. There are, therefore, hand puppets, string puppets, rod puppets, and also composite puppets. A hand puppet is operated from below, and the string puppet from above. While a hand puppet has space below it to cover the operator, the string puppet needs space above the stage. To the right of the stage will be the reciters and to the left the puppeteers.

Recently, puppeteers from two major theatrical groups from Uzbekistan in the U.S.S.R. and Sweden visited India.

The Uzbek National Puppet Theatre was organised in 1939. The main objective was to infuse morality among the audiences and make them aware of the cultural revolution in the USSR. It focussed attention on virtues such as simplicity, kindness, fellow-feeling, and a love for nature and the motherland.

In the item entitled 'Kachal Palvan', an excellent satire put to puppet, Kachal possesses not only powerful muscles but also a



A scene from "Simurg", showing attendants (in the story) dressing Parizad.

tion. The 'Sutradhara' of the Sanskrit drama was originally a string puppet, which could create fantasies on the stage. In Udaipur, in Rajasthan, puppetry has been a perfect theatre since the days of the wick lamps.

Puppets inhabit a wonderful world of their own. Once the performance starts, the audience is asked to suspend disbelief. The Japanese puppets, believed to be the oldest in the world, are a class by themselves. In Java, there have been puppets of dimensions as large as 10 to 30 ft in size. A special setting and addition of voices make them life-like resulting in audience partici-

Puppeteer Shamamat in "Kachal Palvan".



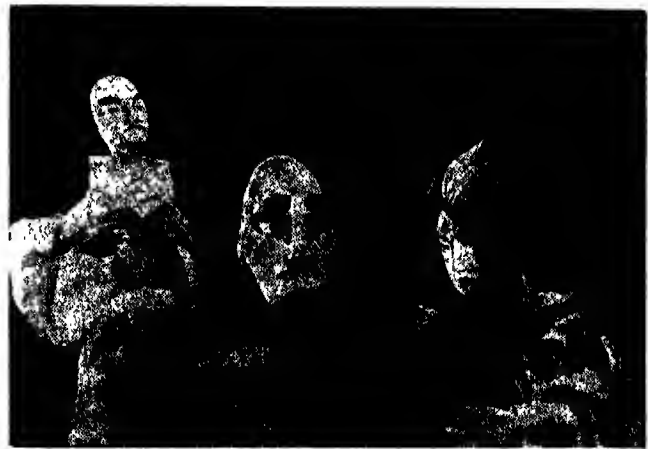
powerful mind and a kind heart. When he liberates the queen butterfly from captivity and saves the ant's house from destruction, he is surely the most human of all human beings. 'Simurg' is a romantic tale twice told by many a poet in the East. Originally based on a poem by Hamid Alimdjan, it illustrates the centuries old theme of the victory of good over evil. One of the most tender tales of Tashkent, it is rendered even more tenderly. Simurg is a female bird of happiness who sings sweeter than any nightingale, soars higher than any eagle, and creates and re-creates such an atmosphere around herself that all the flora and fauna sing and dance and leap with joy. Then there are "Sleeping Beauty" by V. Metalnikov and the "Tale of the Cockerel" by Pushkin, and many more like them which keep the audience spellbound. In all, the Uzbek Theatre has 40 plays in its repertoire. It performs 1,500 times in a year in different theatres in the Soviet Union. While in India the Uzbek puppeteers gave performances in Bombay, Udaipur, Delhi, Lucknow, and Chandigarh. In Udaipur, they were thrilled to see the performances of our own puppeteers

The U.S.A. has used puppets to promote dental hygiene, while in India family planning was promoted through puppet shows. In Latin America, puppetry has helped eradicate illiteracy. In the University of California, puppetry is offered as a major course in the Theatre Arts Department and

Head puppets (from Sweden) in 'The War'.



has been integrated into the curricula of many teacher-training programmes. Some experts in behavioral sciences lean on puppets as tools of instruction. In the U.S.S.R., there are 110 Puppet Theatres and nearly a dozen specialised institutions where puppetry is a distinct discipline. Uzbekistan has been the home of puppetry since the days of Aladin and Ulugh Beg. To watch the Tashkent puppets on the stage is a delightful experience. In Moscow's Obrazisov Puppet Theatre, I witnessed one of the greatest puppet shows. It is called "Divine Comedy"—the story of Adam and Eve 'puppetioed' most sensi-



Solo string puppets of 'A Japanese Tragedy'.

vely. This comedy is originally the production of the Marionette Theatre of Sweden.

Through the medium of puppets the Marionette Theatre presents the problems and contradictions of present day life. It utilizes all forms and techniques of the puppet theatre—glove puppets, rod puppets, string puppets, shadow and head puppets, as well as actors, masques, mimes and other variations and combinations.

Besides giving nearly 4,000 performances in Stockholm, the Swedish company has toured round the world. Founded by Michael Meschke in 1958, the Marionette Theatre has played since then for children almost the year round. At the same time, much experimental and unconventional work has also been done to enlarge the conception of a theatre for adults. Starting



These fishes are iron string puppets for ultra-violet lighting—a novel experiment by Swedish puppetry.

from a basis of traditional puppetry, Meschke tried more and more to integrate the live actor into the world of puppets, masques, and different scenic forms. This development began with 'King Ubu' (1964) and went on with such productions as 'Ondine' (1968), 'The Divine Comedy' (1970) and 'Danton's Death' (1971).

In brief, a puppet is a thing of beauty and is a joy for ever. Over the centuries the puppeteers have continued to hold the imagination of the people by a variety of puppets which talk and dance and weep and laugh on the stage.

K.K. Khullar

Heard of the "Toothbrush Family"?

HOT ROD HARRY, Flash Fluoride, Shaggy Dog, and Susie Sponge are very special characters.

They are members of the Toothbrush Family, loved by children, welcomed by parents and, perhaps most importantly, applauded by dentists.

They were born 12 years ago in the imagination of Mrs. Marcia Hatfield, of Sydney, a mother searching for a way to encourage her children to brush their teeth.

Today, her characters are teaching dental hygiene to millions of children in the U.S.A.

In September 1977, Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) of the United States began screening episodes twice-weekly of the Toothbrush Family's adventures in "Captain Kangaroo", a long-running children's TV programme viewed in more than 2,740,000 American homes five days a week.

The officials of the World Health Organisation are planning a survey to assess the health behaviour changes as a result of these screenings.

The Dean of Dentistry at the University of Sydney, Professor Noel Martin, has encouraged Mrs. Hatfield in developing the series. "Obviously, it is important to teach dental care at as early an age as possible,"

he says. "Equally obviously the lessons will be better learned if the children have fun. And who can doubt children like a cartoon character?"

Mrs. Hatfield was already an established writer for Australian films, TV, and children's book publishers, when the Toothbrush Family was born in 1965. In the early 1970s, she won several international awards for children's film writing.

"I suppose it was a natural consequence of combining motherhood and writing," she says. "I was having great trouble persuading my children, Louella, Scott and Guy, to brush their teeth, so took a writer's way out. I started off with Tess and Tom Toothbrush, their children Tina and Toby, 'Gramps', the grandfather, and Susie, the soft and cuddly bathroom sponge. The family came to life after the human household went to bed and a magical ray of moonlight streamed through the bathroom window. The toothpaste tube—he didn't become 'Flash Fluoride' until dentists told me they were trying to educate people to use fluoridated toothpaste—was also there. He is loved by everyone, but sometimes suffers terrible stomach cramps when careless children squeeze him in his middle! Hot Rod Harry arrived when electric tooth-

brushes became commercially available in Australia."

The Toothbrush Family gained fame among the Hatfield children's school friends, and the stories continued by popular demand.

Before commencing any writing for publication, Mrs. Hatfield consulted Australian dental authorities, including members of the Dental Health Education and Research Foundation of the University of Sydney.

Professor Martin said many dental authorities could see the potential of combining entertainment with education as a way of introducing to young children the concept of dental hygiene.

"A great problem with health or dental education programmes aimed at the young is avoiding making them too technical, and

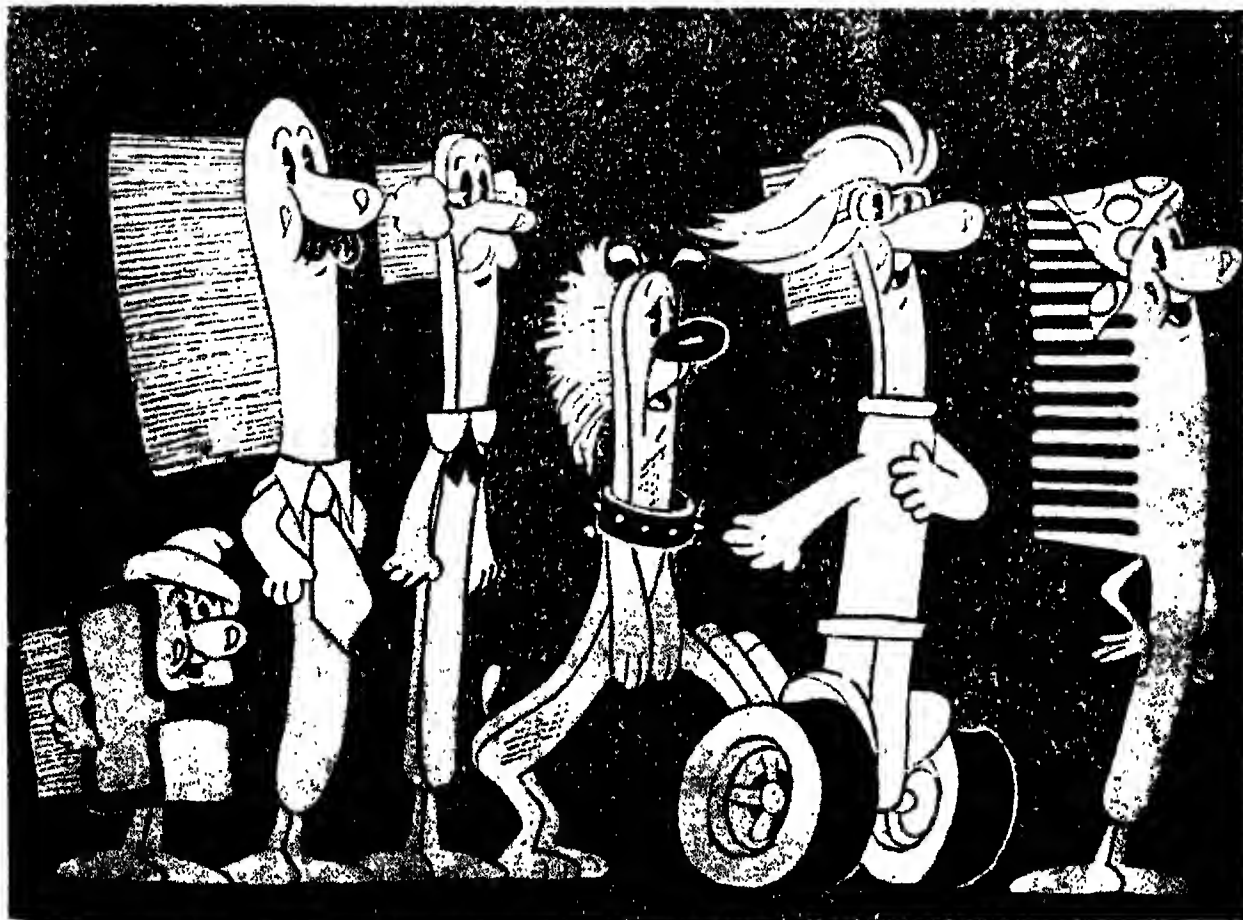
producing a sort of 'over-kill' effect. It will be interesting to see the results of the cartoon series," he said.

In 1976, Mrs. Hatfield received a grant from the Australism Government's Film and Television School to study children's film and television production overseas and to promote the Toothbrush Family.

With the executive producer of CBS Children's Programme, Mr. Jerry Golod, she negotiated screening of 20 four-minute episodes in "Captain Kangaroo" twice a week from September 12, 1977.

The Toothbrush Family did its job well. Today Louella (21), Scott (19), and Guy (17) have almost perfect teeth!

(Courtesy: Australian Information Department)



Some of the 'Toothbrush Family': from left: Nev Nailbrush, Bertie Hairbrush, 'Gramps' (Grandfather) Toothbrush, Shaggy Dog, the 'bad' toothbrush, Hot Red Harry, the electric toothbrush, and Cecily Comb.

BUTTERFLIES BY POST!



SPECIES of butterflies are used as the basis for a set of four Norfolk Island stamps. The 17 cent shows *Pseudocoremia christiani*, a brown butterfly with dark spots and shading on a green background; *Simplicia caeneusalis buffetti* on the 19c is coloured in shaded brown with stripes on a light red ground; depicted on the 20c blue background is *Austrocidaria ralstonae*, which is intricately patterned in shades of brown; and *Papilio ilioneus* on the 40c is dark brown with light orange, light green and bright red markings on a yellow background.

Kenya and Tanzania have used the same designs on stamps to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the East Africa Safari Rally. A British two-litre Ford Escort won the 1977 event, which took place in the toughest conditions in its 25-year history, with only 12 of the 68 competitors completing the more than 5,000 km rally. A competitor speeding through a village is shown on the 50 cent; the start/finish line on the Sh. 1 value; a car tackling a water hazard is seen on the Sh. 2, and the Sh. 5 features a competitor scattering a herd of elephants.

(Courtesy: BIS)



DRACULA : MYTH OR REALITY ?

THE word "Dracula" conjures up in most of our minds gruesome scenes of vampires rising up from their graves and descending on innocent victims, to prey on them; of lonely castles perched on the edge of steep, bottomless precipices. These were scenes which, perhaps, one had witnessed from the safety of a cinema seat, or read of while comfortably curled up in an armchair at home. To me, Dracula had always been merely a fictitious character, a creation of Bram Stoker's fertile imagination, and one had never really questioned the story of the Transylvanian vampire.

So, I was somewhat shocked and fascinated, when I discovered, on reaching Bucharest, that Count Dracula's grave is outside the city and his castle only a couple of hours drive from Bucharest! Located in a very picturesque region of Rumania, whose untouched beauty makes it a delight for visitors, the castle is now a popular spot with tourists. No doubt, they are drawn there more by their fascination with Dracula and the vampire myth.

With Dracula's reputation of rising up from his grave, it was difficult to dispel the feelings of discomfort one experienced, at the thought of having these 'undead' creatures in the neighbourhood. Was this, indeed, the same terrible Count Dracula that Bram Stoker described in his book? Curiosity goaded me to find out if there was any basis to the vampire story.

Historical facts revealed that there did, indeed, exist a 15th century ruler of Wallachia, whose real name was Vlad Tepes, but who was better known as Count Dracula; and who had, by his horrifying deeds and cruelty, earned himself a reputation of being a tyrant. Hence, possibly the name Dracula, which could have been derived from the word "Dracul" which, in the Rumanian language, means the Devil.

Count Dracula's record of cruelty is both shocking and fascinating. He resorted to

very severe methods of punishment even for the lightest of crimes. Anybody found guilty of not observing the law of the land knew only one penalty—to be impaled on a stake. Once the Count had so many persons impaled on stakes that some passersby mistook the corpses for a large forest. Even the lazy were punished severely. A gruesome example is of a woman who had her hands chopped off and who was impaled on a stake, because she made her husband wear a torn shirt! Nor were the insolent spared. Another anecdote is of some foreign diplomats, who refused to take off their hats when they came before the Count, claiming that it was not their custom to do so. He immediately ordered that their hats be nailed to their heads, so that they should never have to remove them.

But Vlad Tepes's severe actions have been justified, and he has been glorified as being one of the greatest rulers the country has ever known. He was not cruel for the sake of cruelty. His motive was purely political. His primary aim was to strengthen the sovereign, because a country which was weak at the centre, easily fell a victim to outside invasions. And his country was at that time facing constant threats from the Turks. To form a strong centre, it was very necessary to bring about law and order at home and to put a stop to the infighting between the various groups within the kingdom. And to achieve this goal, Vlad Tepes was forced to resort to very severe actions. His end justified the means adopted. Besides, in employing these severe actions, he was only using the methods of his time. His contemporaries, like Louis XI of France, used no less cruel methods.

Having succeeded in his domestic affairs, the valorous king organized his army and devoted his attention to putting a stop to Ottoman domination and expansion. He fought successfully against Ottoman domination, and distinguished himself in 1462,



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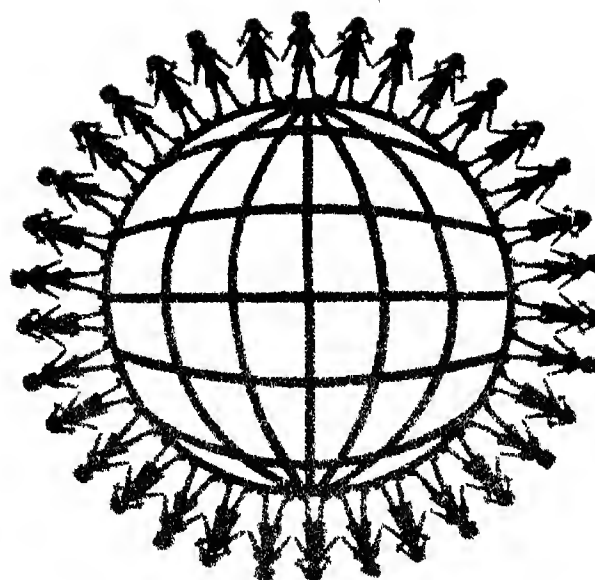
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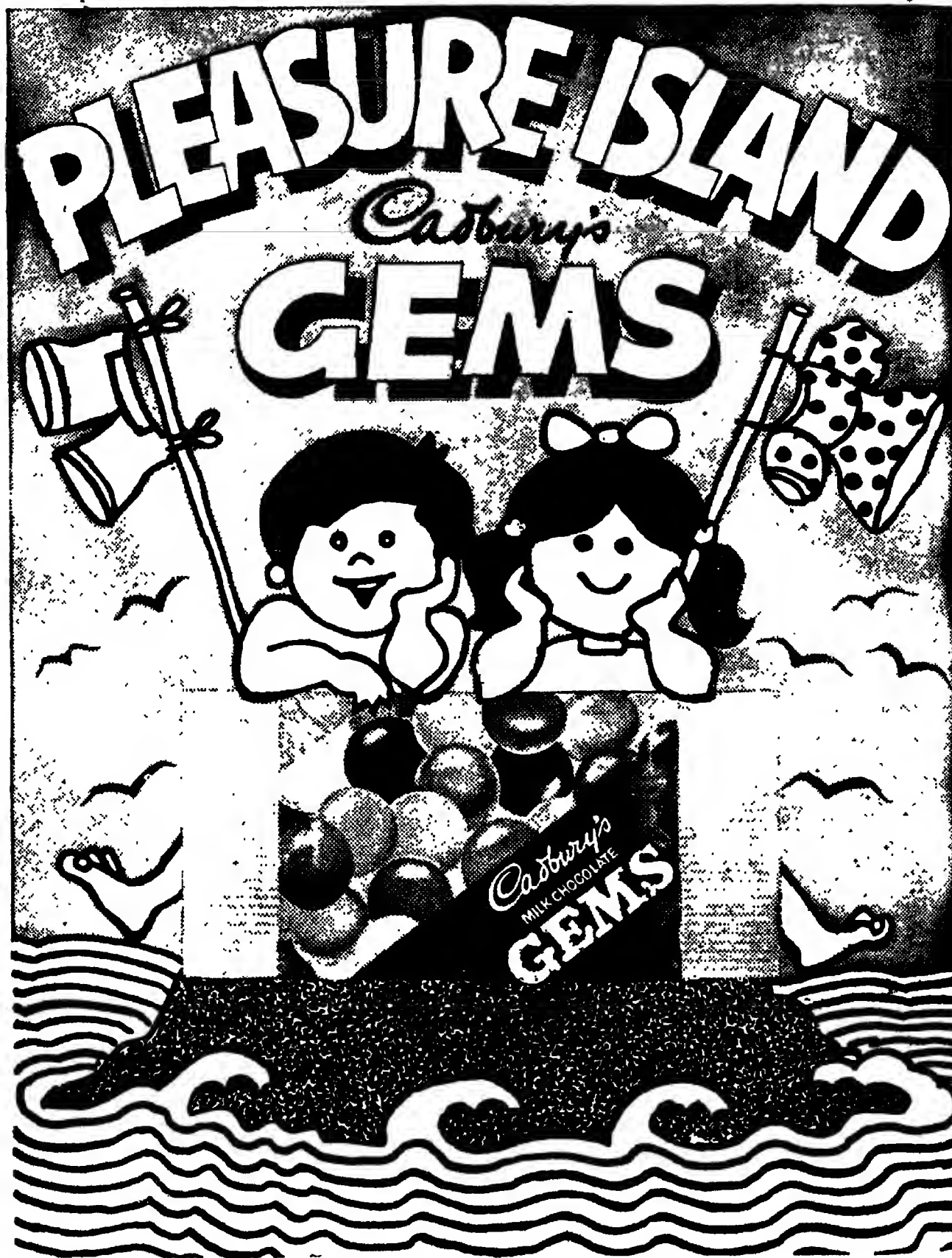
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THE GIRORSE

ONCE upon a time there was a Girorse. He was a girorse because his mum was a horse (which formed the 'orse' part of his name) and his dad was a giraffe (and that made the 'gir' part of his name).

Well, this girorse was a happy little fellow, about as old as you, and he was good and he was handsome. He was tall like his dad, and dark brown like his mum, and he had a face like his dad and nice eyes like his mum. And what was more, he had lovely dark red hearts all over him, which showed how much he loved everybody.

One day, mummy horse said, "Well, little Girorse! You're seven years old now! That's BIG. So you better go out and make some friends!"

So Girorse said "bye-bye" and promised to be home in time for dinner, and went out to look for friends.

And he walked and walked and walked,



and he came to a lovely park where there were lots and lots of horses playing Catch.

'Wow!' thought Girorse happily. 'All of them are my cousins! So they'll be my friends!'

But when he walked up to them, they looked at him up and down, and they looked at one another, and they burst out laughing rudely.

"Y...you?????" they laughed. "You funny-looking thing, you! Why, you're just the 'orse' part of a horse! We won't play with you! We won't be friends with you!!"

Poor Girorse felt so very hurt, but he pretended he didn't care and he walked away grandly with a contemptuous snort.

And he walked and walked and walked, and he came to a lovely meadow where a whole lot of giraffes were playing Tag.

'Oh boy!' thought the Girorse happily. 'All of them are my cousins! They'll be my friends!'

But when he walked up to them, they looked down their noses at him and they looked at one another and they burst out laughing rudely.

"Pooh!" they laughed. "You funny-looking thing, you! You're just the 'gir' part of a giraffe! And you think we'll be friends with *you*?? Ha! Ha! Ha! Pooh!!" and they laughed some more and ran away.

And Girorse felt so very hurt, but being a brave little girorse, he didn't cry, but said, "Pooh, yourself! I don't need you meanies for *my* friends!"

And he walked and he walked and he walked and he came to a pretty little corner where you could sing all day and catch rain-drops on your tongue. But lo and behold! In this corner, there was a cute little girorse-girl, sobbing as if her little girorse heart would break!

"Oh!" exclaimed Girorse. "Why are you crying, little girorse-girl?" and he patted her head in a concerned way.

"Boo-hoo-hoo!" cried the little girl. "I don't have any friends! None of my

horse-cousins will play with me and none of my giraffe-cousins will play with me, because I'm just PART horse and PART giraffe! Boo-hoo-hoo!!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Girorse again. "I have the *very same* problem!" He thought for a moment and then he said, "You know what? Let's you and me be friends! We'll show them! We'll have loads and loads of fun and then they'll know what they're missing!"

But first he found all the girl-horses and girl-giraffes who had been teasing the girl-girorse and yelled at them for making a poor little girorse-girl cry. And the little girorse-girl opened her eyes WIDE and clasped her hands and said, "Ooooooooh!! You're so BRAVE!" (which made our Girorse feel about ten feet tall.)

Then they built a big, big Funfair, and they screamed on the Ferris Wheel and



they got dizzy on the roller-coaster and they ate candy apples and ice-creams and they went on all the Fun Rides and they won a teddy bear. And oh! what a lot of fun they had!

And AHA! All the giraffes and all the horses, who had been so rude and mean to them, stood there feeling s-o-o-o-o sad, because they weren't having the fun the two girorses were having. And how they wished they had made friends in the start, so they could have shared the fun now. And how ashamed they felt.....

Slowly they went to the girorses and

said, "Please, girorses, we're soooooo very sorry for being rude, and we promise *never* to do it again and *please* will you be friends now?"

Well, the girorses being so nice (they had hearts all over them, remember?), they forgave the horses and the giraffes.

And then they all got together and had fun and played happily ever after. And Girorse got home (in time for dinner!) with a whole lot of new friends!!

Minnie P. Swami

When I Got Lost in the Zoo

THAT was a harrowing experience. Oh! What a horrible thing to happen to anyone. That was the day I got lost in the zoo.

I was excited at the thought of our going to the zoo, especially because I learnt from my father that there was a toy train in the zoo premises. We all set off eagerly (my mother, father, brother, and myself). As we entered the gates, the first thing that attracted our attention was the toy train jogging along. My brother and I, in intense excitement, ran forward. My brother pleaded with father that we must have the train ride first. I heartily supported his proposal, and my father had to agree as we both were stubborn. The tickets were bought and the ride began. We had a wonderful ride round the zoo.

After the train ride, we found that the time was nearing 1 o'clock. I suggested that a lunch would do us good. Everybody agreed. We walked to a shaded spot near the birds' cages. We had a hearty meal. As the sun came over our heads, we dozed off slightly. But the constant cawing of a crow woke me up. I saw everybody else was sleeping. I quietly got up and slipped away towards the birds' cages. I was so engrossed in looking at the animals that I didn't realize that time was getting on. Suddenly, I became thirsty. I looked back as usual, thinking that my brother had the water-bottle. But lo! looking back, I found nobody of whom I knew. A chill ran down my spine. My blood froze. I started to run in the

opposite direction thinking that was the way I came.

After running for a long time, I rested for a while and tried to identify the place but found that I had taken the wrong route. I saw some people approaching, but I was shy of asking them the way out. I just roamed about a bit. As the sun started touching the western horizon, I became a bit afraid and started crying. However, I continued to walk on. At last, I mustered enough courage to go and ask some people where the entrance was. They saw my predicament and took pity on me. And they themselves showed me the entrance. I was somewhat relieved. I thanked the kind people.

Suddenly, two persons came towards me and asked, "Are you Shobha?" I was puzzled and replied faintly, "Yes." They said, "We've been looking for you for the past two hours. Your mother and father are waiting for you at the ticket counter." They escorted me to the gates. Trembling I followed. At the gates I saw my parents. My joy knew no bounds. My mother was very happy at the sight of me. I looked at my father; his face was stern. He said, "Shobha, the zoo trip is cancelled." I knew it was my mistake; I walked silently beside my father, my head hung in shame. My brother was angry with me, as because of me the zoo trip was cancelled.

P. Shobha (12)
India



KHOKHA was very busy. He was sitting by the side of the bed and writing something on a bit of paper. His tongue curled the same way his pencil made curls on the paper.

"What are you doing, Khokha?" asked Moni. She had just come in, the clever girl, all hot and dusty with playing.

"A story," answered Khokha.

"Story?" repeated Moni, quite surprised. How could Khokha write a story? "Let me see it," she said.

"No," said Khokha. He snatched up the sheet of paper and hugged it. "This is *my* story. If *you* want a story, you write it."

"Don't be silly," said Moni who was a clever girl. "How can it be *your* story? A story is not a dog."

"Of course, it is," said Khokha.

"Then where is its tail?" asked Moni.

"At the end," said Khokha, and before Moni could ask him any more questions, he started writing again. "Leave me alone,"

he said, "can't you see I'm busy?" Sometimes, Khokha could also be clever.

"All right," said Moni, in a big huff. "If you can write a story, so can I. And my story will have two tails, so there!"

Khokha was too busy to hear what she had said; so Moni, still in a big huff, took out her rough book, looked for a clean page and started writing. Her tongue did not curl like Khokha's, but her eyebrows came together as if they were fighting.

"What are you both doing?" asked a voice from the door. It was Raja, back from playing football.

"Writing a story," said Khokha, without looking up.

"A story with two tails," said Moni. "With two tails and four eyes and eight legs."

"How can a story have two tails and four eyes and eight legs?" asked Raja quite puzzled.

"Well, a dog has one tail and four legs and two eyes, doesn't it?" asked Moni.

"But what does that..." began Raja more puzzled than ever.

"Will you both stop talking?" yelled Khokha. "Can't you see how busy I am?"

"All right, all right," said Raja and Moni in two big huffs.

"I better finish my story," said Moni.

"I'll start mine," said Raja.

So he took out last year's geography book which he had been using for making paper planes, and started writing like Khokha and Moni.

It was, of course, Moni the clever girl who finished first.

"I have finished, I have finished!" she sang out. "Listen to my story."

This was her story:

"Once upon a time, there was a dog with one tail like this.



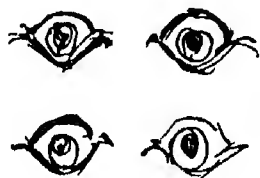
'The dog wanted two tails, so he tied a flower to his tail and he had two tails, like this.



'Then he wanted eight legs, so he tied four shoes to his four legs...'

'I can't draw legs, you see,' said Moni, the clever girl. 'That is why I have not drawn legs. Now listen to the rest.'

'Then the dog wanted four eyes, so he painted two eyes above his real eyes, like this.



'Then the dog was very happy.'

'Isn't that a nice story?' asked Moni, happily.

'Yes, but mine is better,' said Raja, who had also finished. 'Listen.'

'One day, I was playing football and rain came. My shoes and socks and my head got wet. The football also got wet. I yelled at the rain. "Why have you come now?" And the rain said, "I have lost," and it went away. Then I scored two goals and Ma scolded me when I came home.'

'But you haven't drawn pictures like I have,' said Moni, who was a clever girl and knew it, too.

'Oh, only girls draw pictures,' said Raja. 'And anyway, everybody knows what a football looks like. So, why should I draw it?'

'What about the rain?' asked Moni. 'What does rain look like?'

'You don't know what rain looks like?' asked Raja, laughing. 'You go to school and you don't know what rain looks like! You are stupid.'

'I'm not, I'm not,' screamed Moni, the clever girl.

And just as Moni and Raja were about to have a fight, Khokha said, 'I have finished. I have finished, too. Listen to my story.' And he read it out.

'One day there was a frog. Next day it became a butterfly. Then the butterfly ran and ran and became a dog. Then the dog said, "I am Khokha's dog," and it wagged its tail. Then...'

'Is that a story you have written?' asked grandmother, coming into the room. 'Let me hear it from the beginning.'

'Listen to mine, Thamma,' yelled Raja.

'Mine first,' screamed Moni.

'Now, now,' said Thamma. 'Let Khokha read his story first.'

So Khokha began again.

'One day there was a frog. Then it started barking. So everybody said it was a dog. So the frog cried and cried...'

'But that is not the same story,' said Moni. 'Where is the butterfly?'

'Of course, it is the same story,' said Khokha. 'Listen now.'

'Then the frog cried and cried and became a butterfly. The butterfly said, "I want to fly away to Khokha." Then...'

'But it's still not the same story,' said Raja. 'Let me see it.'

And he took Khokha's paper and looked at it. And this is what he saw.



"You call this a story?" asked Raja and he rolled on the floor and started laughing. "A story—ha ha ha ha!"

"Let me see it," said Moni, the clever girl. And when she saw it, she threw her head back and started laughing, too. "Ha ha ha ha ha ha!"

"It is a story, of course, it is a story," said Khokha, crying a little at first and then more and more loudly. "Of course, it is a story."

"Don't cry, Khokha," said Thamma. "Yes, it is a story. And it is the best story in the world."

"The best?" asked Raja sitting up and

wiping the laughter out of his eyes.

"The best?" asked Moni. She stopped laughing and sat down near Thamma.

"Yes, the best story in the world," repeated Thamma. "You know why? Because every time you read it, it changes."

"Like the frog?" asked Khokha, wiping his tears away.

"Like the frog, yes," said Thamma. "What all does the frog change into?"

"Into a butterfly, then into a giraffe, then into a plane, then... then into a story... a story with a tail," said Khokha.

Poile

Better Late Than Never

"PLEASE, driver, go faster, or else we shall be late for school," said Reena to the bus driver.

"Yes, yes !" chorused all the other girls.

The old bus driver shook his head and said, "No, children. My favourite saying is, 'slow and steady wins the race'."

"But, this bus is too slow!" grumbled Reena.

The bus driver simply smiled and said nothing.

All of a sudden, a bus screeched past them and vanished.

"I wish you would go like that," said Tara, another girl, and she looked longingly after the bus that had vanished—well almost.

Immediately after, another bus came down at a high speed.

"Children, I am afraid it may overturn or

have an accident—yes! It's possible, Reena, at that speed."

"Well, let's see, follow it," said Tara and her friend.

"Very well."

They followed the bus and a little later, they heard a crash, and a loud shriek filled the air.

The girls whirled around and then shuddered when they saw the bus ahead of them had crashed into a car.

The old bus driver stopped the bus and jumped out to see what had happened. He soon jumped back in and said, "No one is hurt—so all's well! You see, girls, slow and steady always wins the race—and it's always better to be late than never," the bus driver added as they continued on their way.

*Sharmishta R. Choudhury
India*

CHACHU'S ARRIVAL



"GET ready quickly, Mina," said Munna, as he put on his green checked shirt. "What are you going to wear?"

"Chachu would love to see me in my red frock. At what time does his train arrive?" asked Mina.

"Four-thirty sharp."

"We must give them a warm welcome," said Mina, as she got into her new red flowered frock. Then she looked at the wall clock. "It is only three-thirty. There is still some time. Let us make two garlands," she suggested.

Mina and Munna ran to the garden, plucked some marigolds, and made two garlands—one for Chachu and another for Chachi.

Chachu's real name was Krishna Mohan, but everybody called him Chachu. He was coming back to his hometown after his retirement from the police service. He had bought a small house close to Munna and Mina's house. The children were particularly happy about it. Fat and chubby, short and fair, sporting a butterfly moustache, bald-headed Chachu was the most handsome, the most talkative, and the funniest of all men. He was liked and loved by everyone.

Mina, Munna, their father, and some friends engaged two tongas to go to the station. The train was arriving on time. Platform tickets were bought and the whole crowd went in to receive Chachu and Chachi. No sooner had they reached the platform than the train arrived. As it slowed down, their eyes wandered from one compartment to the next for a glimpse of the familiar face of Chachu. It was, however, the familiar voice that greeted them first.

"Mina! Munna! Rakesh! I am here!" Chachu was shouting at the top of his voice. Chachu, in his police uniform—khaki shirt and shorts and cap—was standing at the door, ready to jump down. But soon someone caught hold of his shirt tail from behind. Obviously it was Chachi. She tried to hold him back, while Chachu tried hard to move forward. Like a tug-of-war!

Chachi left him only when the train came to a halt. Beaming with excitement,

Chachu jumped down on to the platform. He took Mina in his arms, and she put the marigold garland around Chachu's neck. Munna climbed into the compartment and garlanded Chachi. Everybody exchanged handshakes and smiles and warmly welcomed Chachu and Chachi.

Porters were called and the luggage was brought down. While Chachu was busy talking, Chachi set about counting the items carefully. "Eight....nine....fifteen....twenty, thirty-five....fifty-two." She moved towards Chachu, stood on her toes to reach his ear, and murmured something. "What?" shouted Chachu.

"Only fifty-two items. One is missing," Chachi repeated.

Chachu's face lost its colour as he counted and found only fifty-two items. The crowd got equally alarmed. Mina started counting. Munna also counted. They did not find even fifty-two items. They counted only forty-eight items. Before they could utter anything, Chachu declared in a high-pitched voice, "I am a police officer. Let nobody touch my luggage." Turning towards the porters, he said, "You, porters, should not move. I won't allow even the train to move. Call the police; we must find out the thief," he yelled.

Soon a constable arrived at the spot. He saluted Chachu and stood in attention. "How many items were there, sir?" he asked politely. "Could you please tell me what is the missing item?"

Scratching his bald head, Chachu tried to recollect, while the policeman himself counted the items.

"But....sir, there are only forty-eight items. So five items are missing," he announced with greater concern.

"Did you count *my* shoes and *my wife's* chappals?" asked Chachu in all seriousness. At the mention of 'chappals and shoes', Mina and Munna chuckled.

Chachu was still trying hard to recollect the missing item, while Chachi stood in a pensive mood.

"Chachu, did you count your spectacles?" asked Mina.

"No."

"Did you have another umbrella?" asked Munna helpfully.

"No."

The constable checked inside the compartment once again. Nothing was found. He even checked with the other passengers in the compartment. They also could not help. By that time, the guard also arrived to enquire, because the train was being delayed. "Let the train move, sir," he



said sternly.

"No, the train cannot move till I get my fifty-third item," pronounced Chachu, in a stubborn voice.

No one knew what to do. Then they saw Chachi move close to Chachu, stand on her toes to reach Chachu's ear once again, and say in a hushed voice, "I say, we had a 'surahi' when we left Itarsi, and that was broken. Don't you remember?"

The moment Chachu heard the word "surahi", he burst into a loud laughter. "My goodness! It *was* the surahi. We completely forgot about it. I'm very sorry," Chachu said, as if nothing had happened.

The crowd around giggled loudly. The

constable murmured something. The guard knitted his eyebrows as he blew his whistle and waved the green flag. As the train steamed off the platform, Chachu commanded the porters, "Lift the luggage, there are fifty-three...no, no, fifty-two items in all. Some of us will walk in the front. Let no porter move too fast. We will engage three tongas, note down the names of the drivers, and then only we'll move!"

Ten porters lifted Chachu's luggage. And he himself led the long procession, wearing the marigold garland.

Chachu was in his real spirits once again!

Manorama Jafa

A Time to Keep Your Heart Pure

ONCE upon a time, there lived a little girl called Mohana. She was a good girl. She was eight years old. Her heart was pure. She obeyed her parents. She loved everyone. Her parents were poor. Her neighbour was a very mean little girl, whose name was Seema. She was 9 years old. One year older than Mohana. She was hated by everyone except Mohana. Do you know why? Because she was a kind-hearted girl. But Seema was rich and she got whatever she wanted. As for Mohana, she had only one toy for a year, a doll, while Seema had many toys.

Now, one morning a poor man came begging to their houses. Mohana gave whatever she had. Seema didn't give anything. She said, "Go away! Why do you come begging like this? Don't you feel ashamed of yourself?"

Just at that moment, Mohana came. "Seema," she said, "why do you say such

things to a poor man like him? Don't you feel ashamed of yourself?"

Then, what do you think happened? The poor man was no ordinary man. He had once been a teacher. He said, "Dear children, among you both, one is good and one is bad. Seema, don't you realise that it is no use being bad? You should always be good."

Saying this he turned to Mohana and said, "Dear Mohana, you have taught Seema a lesson. I hope she learnt it."

He told Seema, "I will come again to see that you have turned a new leaf, like Mohana."

The motto of this story is, keep your heart always pure, as pure as the clear waters of the Ganga.

*Preeti Kattishettar (11)
India*

THE MOON BEAMED

THE moon beamed and the beam slid gently down to earth. It landed in a clearing in the woods, where only the little creatures lived—the birds, squirrels, rabbits, and deer.

They saw the beam sliding down and they gazed starry-eyed in wonder. It came down so softly, not making even the slightest sound. Looking like a light, luminous, gossamer veil. Yet, when a pink-nosed rabbit stretched out his paw to touch the airy veil, there was nothing there to touch. It was there and it wasn't there!

In awe, the creatures encircled the beam, not knowing what to do. Till a tiny little bird flew around it, twittering:

"The beam,
The beam,
The magical beam."

And as if on cue, all the little creatures started dancing around the beam, singing:

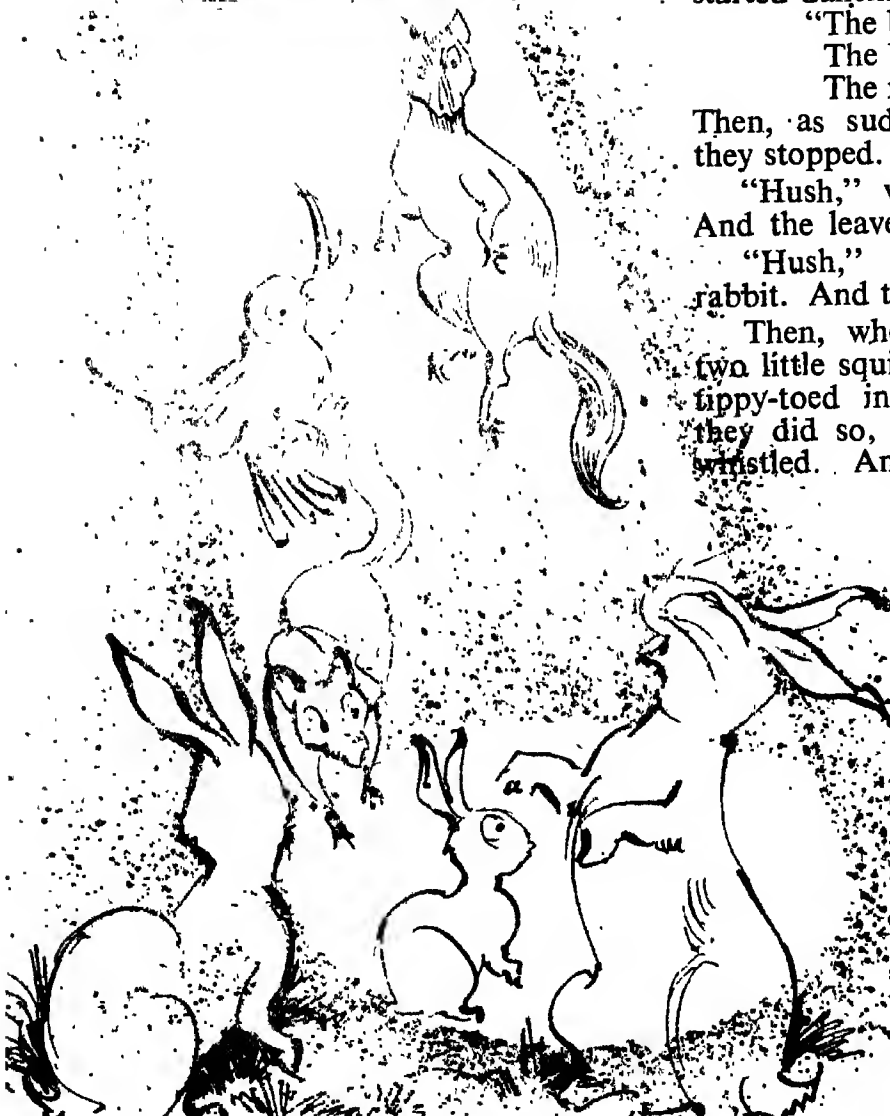
"The beam,
The beam
The magical beam."

Then, as suddenly as they had started, they stopped.

"Hush," whispered a wide-eyed doe. And the leaves on the trees stood still.

"Hush," murmured a snowwhite rabbit. And the wind in the air stood still.

Then, when all was silent and still, two little squirrels, the littlest of them all, tippy-toed into the beam. As soon as they did so, the leaves rustled, the wind whistled. And in tune with the rustling



and whistling, the squirrels began to dance. Their tiny paws met, their tails swished. They danced and they danced and they danced. And as they danced, their feet lifted from the ground. Higher and higher they rose, lifted by the beam.

The creatures stared in surprise. They moved even closer to the beam, but they did not enter it.

"It's foolishness," said the pink-nosed rabbit who had tried to touch the beam. "It's foolish to get lifted by a beam. It seems to be there, but it isn't there! I should know, I tested it."

"But you can't test a beam," protested a frightened, long-legged deer. "You can't test a beam, because when you do, you find it isn't there. You just believe in it and the stronger your belief, the higher you get lifted. Look, look how high the squirrels have been lifted."

All the creatures looked. They saw the squirrels high, high up in the air. They were still dancing and they looked littler than ever before. The grey of their fur had turned silver. Pale silver. And they did not seem to be real. In fact, it looked as if they were a part of the beam and the beam was a part of them!

The creatures all looked and not one of them said a word. But they all had the same thoughts. 'What will happen when the beam disappears? What will happen to the squirrels when their feet touch the ground?'

The squirrels seemed to know what the creatures were thinking. For, just then, they stopped dancing. They looked and they saw the creatures looking up at them. They saw the trees and the beam. They looked and they saw one another. Then, suddenly and swiftly, they flew into a hole in a tree, which was their home. The beam followed them.

And when night turned to day and the beam disappeared, it was found that a bit of it had got left behind. It was with the littlest squirrels. It was about them and inside them, and it never left them. So that when their feet touched the ground, they touched, but it seemed as if they didn't! And they were protected.

Viswajita Das

DREAM-WORLD

Oh! to feel the joyful bliss of freedom,
To feel my free wings flapping in the atmosphere
of joy,

With a halo around my head,
Into the world of happiness I tread.
To drink from the deep blue cup of the sky,
And fly above the heavenside high,
To walk through the gardens of peace,
To feel the confetti of happiness upon me shower.
And the rest of the world shall flower,
To break the bonds of slavery,
And to step into my dreamland —
Where there is HOPE and LOVE and everlasting
PEACE.

Oh! to feel the beauty of that world unknown,
Where the cool winds of love have blown,
To share that everlasting glory,
And to lose myself in that place,
Where there is no one unkind,
And there is hope for the mankind,
Where there is TRUST and HOPE and FAITH,
And there is none to hate,
Where the sun of friendship never sets,
Where there are no snares and nets
Ready to lure me back into that world —
That old world of reality of human injustice,
That old world which has many wicked faces,
That world of human aces
Who have shattered my dreams and broken my
heart.

And I who have played my part
So well in life,
Do I not have a right to possess
That dream-world, although it is
Just plain fantasy?

Smita Tyagi (13)
India

RAMU IN ORBIT

THE STORY SO FAR

The sylvan meadows of Ootacamund, in Tamilnadu, cradling in the lush green Nilgiri mountains, suddenly echoed an alarm. It was the summer of 2077. "Bleep! Bleep! The radio-telescope there had picked up some strange signals. The control room soon hummed with people. They found the signals unique. Other tracking stations in India and elsewhere were alerted. The giant telescope at Kavalur spotted something strange in the skies. The object was seen orbiting Mars. But two days later, it just disappeared! Then, suspense for four long days. Once again, it was Kavalur—spotting a star in broad daylight. Was it really a star? Wasn't it looking like a spaceship? Wasn't it resembling a star-fish?

While scientists agitatedly debated the nature of the satellite, a strange phenomenon was noticed in the Gold Fields of Kolar. The gold deposits there showed some 'signatures', presumably left by cosmic rays. Adding to the suspense was some intriguing radio noise. Was the doomsday approaching? Was the alien spacecraft in trouble? Or was it poised for an attack? The conclusion, in simple terms, was that the unusual signals meant a message for man, and perhaps the satellite was waiting for an answer. The Indian satellite 'Rohini', which had selected an elongated orbit, flashed a series of messages declaring friendship and offering any help that might be required. For some time, the spaceship went silent. Then, oddly, it began repeating the signals from Rohini!

The Rohini Mission Control reported a queer behaviour of the oscillograph. The computer printout showed new codes. When decoded, the message urged a "meeting" 1,410,000 km away from the earth! An urgent world conference in Sriharikota decided on a rendezvous with the aid of a reusable space shuttle. It was also decided to first send a robot for obtaining as many clues as possible about the alien ship. The robot was soon ready as a result of international effort and was sent up. An analysis of the mass of data sent by the robot confirmed the desire of the alien spacecraft, now named 'Trivikrama', for a meeting with those who con-

trolled the earth satellite. Preparations were then launched for sending a team of men and women.

Twenty scientists, including four women, soon went aboard 'Cauvery' for the rendezvous with the alien ship. The international team was led by Captain Venkatesh. Cosmonaut Ramu, his wife Anju, also a spacewoman, and navigator Padma made up the other Indian members.

While in 'parking orbit', Cauvery received the message that 'Trivikrama' had moved away without any warning. Were they to deorbit, asked Venkatesh. Was the adventure in space to be called off? wondered scientists on earth. While they debated the pros and cons, on the third day, Cauvery got the warning of a solar flare. The crew and the Mission Control then conjectured the reason why the alien craft had moved away to avoid being caught in the solar flare—a clear indication of superior intelligence. The spotting of the retro-fire of Trivikrama brought in some hope of a rendezvous.

On approaching the alien spacecraft, Cauvery noticed what a huge complex it was—resembling a spiral galaxy. However, there was apparently no docking device. Nobody could guess whether there was any living being inside. Strangely, Trivikrama failed to respond to any activities projected from Cauvery. A film on the evolution of life was screened; then came great works of art, pictures of world's peoples, numbers, alphabets, mathematical symbols. No, the alien craft just did not react at all.

The Mission Control gave the go-ahead for a spacewalk and possible entry into Trivikrama. Cosmonauts Ramu and Anju got ready, and soon the space couple were actually standing on the hull of Trivikrama! They saw an array of sophisticated instrument panels and gauges inside. Though there was no visible response from Trivikrama, Cauvery noticed that whenever there was a change of display or messages, there were synchronous broadcasts from the alien spacecrat. Were the messages being transmitted to another master craft?

Now read on...

6. QUERIES BY ALIENS

CLOCKS on Cauvery announced the dawn of another day. Captain Venkatesh remembered that it was his birthday. The Mission Control enabled him to see his family on the TV. Back home his little daughter was cutting the cake on his behalf.

Venkatesh began thinking about Trivikrama. The colours of the rainbow had had no reaction on the aliens. Would infra-red waves prove useful? he asked himself. No harm in trying, he felt assured. His proposal was okayed by Mission Control, and it was decided to try the method the same evening.

Additional precautions were taken. A close watch was kept so as to notice even the minutest change, if any, on the alien craft. The retro-fire system of Cauvery was kept ready. At the touch of a button, the craft would go farther and farther towards home, protecting itself by throwing a halo of rays to repel any harmful radiation.

Soon it was 5 p.m. Indian Standard Time. A worldwide satellite relay brought the drama to almost every TV set. The infra-red rays were switched on. At once, everyone was nearly blinded by what they saw on Trivikrama. It was as if a million automobile headlights had been suddenly switched on on a dark night!

Rows and rows of dots of every conceivable shape lighted up on the side panels of Trivikrama. It recognised, perhaps, only infra-red!

A computer analysis of the lighted dots began. It showed that Trivikrama was, indeed, a more complicated machine than what it looked to the naked eye. Even the first sight convinced the scientists of a much superior workmanship in etching out thousands of electronic gadgets outside the spaceship, that glowed in infra-red.

Suddenly, the infra-red aerial of Cauvery registered a transmission from Trivikrama. A computer study of the transmitted message revealed several inquisitive questions. "They" wanted to know more about the human brain and the human heart, which can stand the "terrific" gravity for about seventy years. They wanted biological samples.

The requests were not vague. The number and nature of the requirements were specified. What more, "they" wanted details of the functioning of the brain!

Venkatesh was asked to explain it as far as he could and send the more difficult queries back home for expert advice. In particular, "they" wanted a two-year old brain for obvious reasons. Only at that age has the brain a full stock of 10,000 million neurone cells and 100,000 million glial cells, providing a packing and nourishment for neurones. After two, man generally starts losing neurones at the rate of 10,000 a day.

The seat of memory was the next question. Is it a chemical molecule of some sort? Or is it something like an electronic switchboard? At one stage, Venkatesh had to give up talking further. His role was transferred to ten experts on the earth! They informed the alien spacecraft that by increasing the ribonucleic acid and certain proteins in the human brain, memory powers and learning processes could be increased. It was also stated that memory is associated with synapses—those minute gaps between ends of nerve fibres and neurones, there being 10 million, million synapses, enough to store 10,000 million memory bits of information normally accumulated in a lifetime. There was no clear path of telling just how the synapses are spanned for the impulses to get connected and recognised.

During the "talking" sessions, Venkatesh and his colleagues acted as if there were some beings on the other side, just to reassure their mental balance. But it was becoming clear that there was 'no one' on the other side, and it was only a complicated lifeless contraption, echoing the orders of unknown masters. The Mission Control even received a secret message from two nations, proposing that part of the panels on Trivikrama be destroyed, if nothing was gained from the visit.

A meeting of top scientists, in Srihrikota considered the coded message. Several delegations argued against the destruction of the spacecraft or any part of it. They frankly feared terrible reprisals.

It was obvious, said Prof. Vachaspati,

that the craft could be made to strike a blow at vital points on the earth. The very fact that it could move away and return to a pre-determined point in space, with apparently no living being inside, showed the extraordinary capacity of its makers. It was thought that man would shrink in their estimation, if he became foolish enough to take a few potshots at such a magnificent machine. That no harm or threat had till then emerged confirmed the peaceful intention of the visitors. They should be given all respect so that, one day, their masters themselves might decide to visit the earth to know more about their good neighbours.

Ultimately, Prof. Vachaspati's views prevailed. A task force was set up to ensure the timely collection of the biological materials desired by the alien spacecraft.

Meanwhile, Venkatesh reported from Cauvery more strange happenings. An extension to what appeared to be an airlock system was seen on Trivikrama. As a second-to-second watch was kept on it, everything was promptly noticed. It was like the ejection of a cassette from a tape recorder—a slab, brilliantly shining in the sun. It stayed there, without being tied to anything. Was it a waste disposal kit? Or could it be some sort of gift to man? Or was it just part of a sophisticated mechanism that periodically extends some sensors?

Hardly had 24 hours passed after its appearance, when something unexpected happened. The slab was "blown off" from Trivikrama towards the earth. There was no solar wind to disturb it. Nor was there any exhaust of a spacecraft to deflect it.

Cauvery's sensors were immediately locked on to track the slab. Even though it went down towards the earth, it did not go far. It appeared to stay midway. Some scientists wondered whether it would be the familiar pattern of an orbiter and a lander of a visiting spacecraft. There was, however, no output of any electro-magnetic wave from the slab. Even the infra-red searchlights did not evoke any reaction.

No one was in a position to make the next move. The slab continued its slow orbit along with Trivikrama, in its path around the sun.

Venkatesh was worried. He wondered whether any superior power was not at work. The seven days he had spent near the giant spacecraft had been remarkably free of any fear. But, for the first time, there was uneasiness overpowering the captain's will.

His communications manager, Shim-bun, was however calm. He had no time to worry. He had to be alert and sometimes he caused a flutter by mistaking an earth-orbiting satellite to be an unusual intruder. His extreme sense of duty, however, paid handsome dividend. He spotted a spacecraft, about 1,000 km below them. His first calculations showed that it was coming up to Trivikrama. But then there was no warning from ground control. No such craft was expected, as it was clearly understood in Sriharikota that only one craft would be sent from the earth.

An immediate check with Mission Control revealed that a spacecraft, with undisclosed aims, unexpectedly did take off from somewhere about the Pacific a few hours earlier.

Before Cauvery could establish contact with it, a retro-fire was noticed on the second craft. Clearly, it was trying to de-orbit. Did something go wrong? Why did that craft defy the space law and come up undisclosed? Who could have launched it and why?

These questions would have normally been analysed and even fed to computers. But the crew on board Cauvery were still feeling the loss of the slab, which they thought was being extended to them by the unknown beings on Trivikrama.

Amidst all the excitement, co-navigator Padma had observed the drift of the slab, which normally would have followed the mother spacecraft in its journey. But for some strange reason, it was "pushed" downwards for a lower orbit. Perhaps, there was an orbiter and a lander inside, for a soft landing mission.

Padma's eyes were sharp. She saw that the other spacecraft from the earth was chasing the slab on a lower orbit. It did not take too long to notice that the other craft had successfully recovered the slab. There was consolation that some earthy spacecraft had got the priceless treasure.

(Turn over to page 36)

THE TWO SISTERS

ONCE upon a time there lived a weaver who had two wives. Each of them had a daughter. One was called Sukhu or 'happiness'. The other was called Dukhu or 'sorrow'. They lived happily enough as long as the weaver was alive, but when he died all of a sudden, the fate of the two sisters took completely different turns. Sukhu's mother got hold of all the property of the weaver and turned Dukhu and her mother out of the house. Being simple and peace-loving by nature, they accepted their lot without a murmur. Sukhu and her mother, being well-off, lived a life of luxury and ease. Dukhu and her mother lived in a lowly little hut, and had to work from dawn to dusk in order to make both ends meet. They were so kind and helpful that everyone liked them just as

everyone detested arrogant Sukhu and her mother.

One morning, as Dukhu sat spinning at her wheel, a gust of wind blew off the cotton from her hands. Greatly upset, poor



Dukhu ran after the wind, imploring it to give it back to her as they were too poor to lose it. But the naughty wind only laughed and blew the cotton further and further away. Dukhu tried to follow it, tears in her eyes. At last, the wind took pity on her and said, "Go to my mother, the old woman in the moon, who weaves puffs of clouds all day long. She'll give you back your cotton."

As Dukhu was running fast, a cow at the roadside called out to her. "Dukhu," said the cow in a mournful voice, "I've had nothing to eat for hours. Won't you stop for a while and give me some grass to eat?"

Dukhu stopped at once. She cleaned out the cowshed thoroughly, gave the cow some grass, and resumed her journey.

She soon heard another cry. This time it was a plantain tree. It said, "Dukhu, the strong wind has been ruffling my branches and I do feel uneasy. Can you do something about it?"

Dukhu fixed it up by tying them firmly. She then ran after the wind. The next one to stop her was a huge banyan tree. "Dukhu! Dukhu!" it cried. "The birds have made such a mess beneath my branches. Do sweep it clean for me."

Dukhu stopped and swept the place clean and began to run again. The last one to stop her was a thirsty horse who wanted a drink of water. No one called her again. Dukhu did not stop running till she reached the old woman in the moon.

She was sitting in a large courtyard spinning yarns of moonbeam from great puffs of clouds. Her hair was white as snow. Her clothes were themselves made of the finest moonbeams.

Dukhu walked up to her and stood by timidly, not daring to speak. But the old woman did not look up. So, Dukhu plucked up courage and said, "Please, grandma, your son the wind has blown off a handful of my cotton. We are very poor and my mother will scold me for losing it. The wind told me to ask you for my cotton. May I have it please?"

"What a sweet little girl!" exclaimed the old woman in the moon. "Of course, you'll get your cotton, dear. But first of all, you must have a bath in that pool yonder and also have something to eat."

"But I don't have any extra clothes," said Dukhu, "nor a towel to dry myself."

"Go to that room," said the old woman, pointing to a room in the east, "and you will find everything there. After you've had a dip, go to the next room and you'll find some food awaiting you. See me after you've had it and I'll give you your cotton."

When Dukhu entered the room, her eyes nearly popped out, for it was full of the loveliest clothes she had ever seen. She was about to pick out the brightest of them when she remembered her mother's words: It is wrong to be greedy. So she picked up the simplest sari from the heap and a rough, coarse towel. Then she went to the pool. It looked so clear and oh! so inviting. Dukhu jumped in and took a dip. The old woman had told her that she should take just three dips and no more. So, Dukhu took two more dips and got out of the pool.

It so happened that the pool was an enchanted one. The first dip had made her the wisest girl on earth. The second one made her the most beautiful. The third dip covered her with the choicest of jewelry from head to foot. But Dukhu was so busy thinking of the old woman's kindness that she did not really notice any of these things—not even the fact that her simple sari had turned into a gorgeous 'Banarasi'.

Dukhu went to the next room and found a table laden with the most delicious of dishes. But before she could taste any of them, she remembered her mother. She must be saving up her frugal salt-and-rice lunch, thinking Dukhu might be doubly hungry after her run. Dukhu felt a strange lump in her throat and could eat no more than a little salt and rice herself. Then she went back to the old woman. "Please, may I have my cotton now?" she said in a soft voice. "I must go home or my mother will get very worried."

The old woman pointed out a row of



caskets of various sizes. "Take whichever you like," she said and turned to her spinning once more. Dukhu thanked her, picked up the smallest casket and started on her homeward journey.

The horse stopped her once again, saying, "You were kind to me, Dukhu. Here's a pony for you to ride on."

The banyan tree called out to her next. "Stop a while, Dukhu. Take this pot of gold coins. It was kind of you to have

cleaned up this place, so here's something in return."

Dukhu placed the pot on the pony as she thanked the tree. 'Now my poor mother need not work so hard, she thought gratefully. The cow presented her with a lovely white calf, and the plantain tree gave her a huge bunch of golden bananas. Laden with all these presents, Dukhu reached home at last.

Her mother had been greatly worried at her disappearance so long. She cried out in joy when she saw Dukhu and hugged her. The little casket had fluffs of cotton and was crammed with precious gems—enough to spend their whole life in comfort.

But Dukhu and her mother, being generous by nature, felt it their duty to share all this with Sukhu and her mother. After all, wasn't Sukhu her half-sister? So it was for her to share everything with Sukhu, though she had been unkind of Dukhu and her mother. Thinking thus, they made for the home that had once been their's but from which they had been so mercilessly driven away.

"Sister," said Dukhu's mother to Sukhu's mother, "the old woman in the moon has given a lot of things to Dukhu. We've brought half of them for Sukhu."

Sukhu's mother, however, was too jealous to see them, and started saying a lot of nasty things to her. "Take your rubbish and clear out of this place!" she said, giving Dukhu's mother a push. "We want none of it. My own Sukhu will get plenty of better things from the old woman!" Hurt and puzzled, Dukhu and her mother left the place.

The next morning, Sukhu sat spinning at her wheel and left the cotton scattered all over the place. When the wind blew it off, she began to run after it, saying, "You horrid, nasty wind! Give me back my cotton at once." The wind said nothing, but Sukhu ran on, following him.

When the cow called her and asked for some grass, she made a face and said, "What cheek! Imagine ME bothering about

(Turn over to page 35)

A Morning Meeting of Prizes and Prizewinners

THE day belonged to the children. It was the prize distribution of the Shankar's International Children's Competition, 1976. Some seven hundred and fifty prizes won by children in 74 countries were being distributed. Nearly seventy children had also come to receive their prizes in person. And the entire proceedings of the day were in the hands of five picked children—chosen at an elocution competition held earlier.

The morning of Wednesday, December 28, was rather chilly after the sudden spell of rain the previous night. But this had not a wee bit dampened the excitement of the children—the prizewinners, their brothers and sisters, and their friends—gathered at Vigyan Bhavan (New Delhi). Their expectant faces eagerly looked for the arrival of Prime Minister Morarji Desai who had agreed to distribute the prizes. They were naturally disappointed when it was announced that the Prime Minister might not make it as his plane had been held up on his return journey from Poona that morning.

However, when once the ceremony started, after a little delay, their enthusiasm came back and their cheers and clappings filled the air right through. Their first 'target' was little Lipika Majumdar from Cambridge School, who extended a warm welcome to those present, including the new Chairman of the Children's Book Trust, Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, who had readily consented to give away the prizes. Young Nirath Perakath of St. Xavier's presented a report of the progress made by the Competition and of the activities of the Trust devoted to the cause

of children. Krishna Pant of Air Force Central School, who stood first in the elocution contest, then made his Presidential speech. Though midget-looking, he almost carried the day with him, for such was his poise and demeanour.

This was followed by the actual prize distribution. Walter Hubert Rau of St. Columba's first began calling upon the ambassadors or other distinguished representatives to accept the prizes won by the children of their respective countries. Of course, they knew that the huge boxes they carried away contained not only the prizes but the good wishes of the children of India.

Tiny four-year-old Deepthi Vasu from down south Kerala led the 70 children of Delhi and other parts of India who had come personally to take their prizes. Nehru Awardee Shipra Saha, who came in the last, was the only other gold medallist in India, besides 'President' Krishna Pant.

After the prize distribution, the chief guest of the morning formally released Volume 28 (marking the 28th successive year of the Competition) of the Shankar's Children's Art Number, which is composed of the prizewinning entries of the 1976 Competition. Sonia Bhasin's (Presentation Convent) vote of thanks brought the curtain down on a memorable morning for the children.

Their disappointment over the Prime Minister's unavoidable absence was only short-lived, as he very graciously received the prizewinners in his office soon after he got back to the Capital.

(Photo feature on facing page)

THE DAY BELONGED TO CHILDREN

(See story alongside)



Winner Nikur Mody



Gold Medallist Krishna Pant



Prizewinner Navdeep Kahli



Ambassador Pavel Kanka
Czechoslovakia



Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya
releases Children's Art Number



High Commissioner Peter Curti
of Australia



Left: Prime Minister Morarji Desai shakes hands with 4-year-old Deepti Vasu.
Right: The Prime Minister with a group of prizewinners.

**PRESIDENT
OF INDIA'S
GOLD MEDAL WINNER**



**Mia Nagasawa
Japan**

**VICE-PRESIDENT
OF INDIA'S
GOLD MEDAL WINNER**



**Narayana Subrahma
Canada**

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU GOLD MEDAL WINNERS :



**Noriko Suzuki
Japan**



**Judit Orcsik
Hungary**



**G.G. Kanthie Renu
Sri Lanka**



**Mary Rose Walker
Ireland**



**Barbel Richter
G.D.R.**



**Hector Mario Carrozzi
Argentina**



**Leong Yiat Yam
Singapore**



**Shipra Saha
India**



**Uta Siafert
G.D.R.**



**Ladislav Michalak
Czechoslovakia**



**Lim Fang Woei
Malaysia**



**Robert Roy
Australia**



**Elke Didschuneit
G.D.R.**



**Lea Sedlakova
Czechoslovakia**



**Lohman Kamur
Malaysia**



**Barbara Bogiel
Poland**

PRESIDENT OF INDIA'S GOLD MEDAL



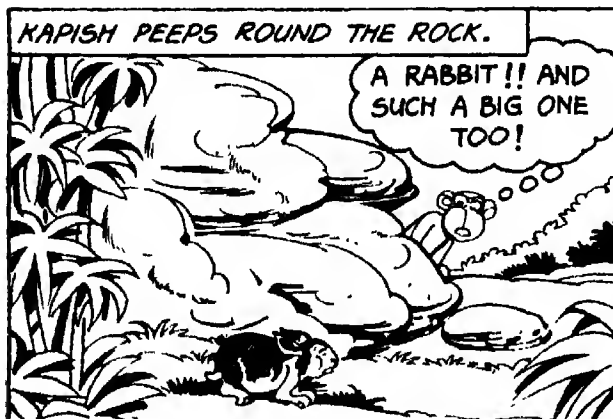
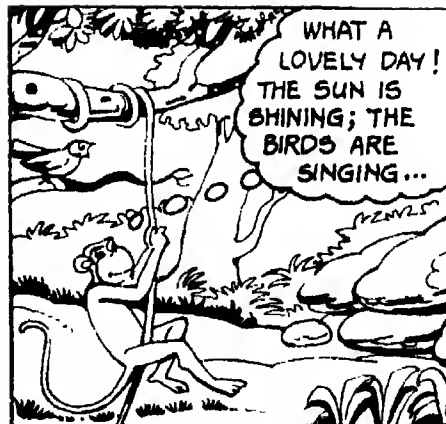
Mie Nagasawa (15) Japan

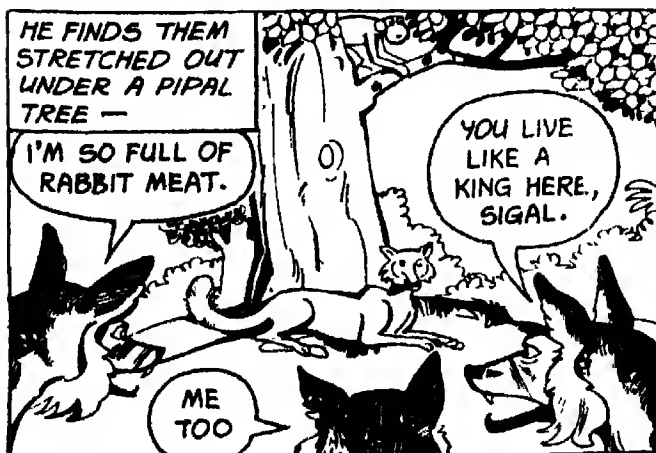
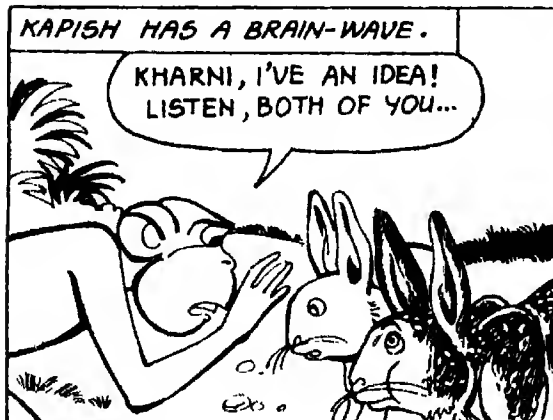
My Friend

KAPISH



● ANANT PAI
● MOHANDAS





THE JACKALS HAVE HAD A HEAVY MEAL AND THEY ARE FEELING DROWSY —

YOU NEED NOT WORRY ABOUT FOOD, AS LONG AS YOU ARE HERE AND... BLAH... BLAH.

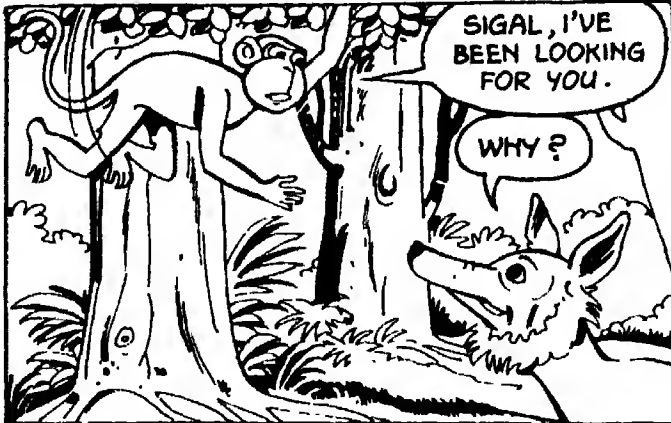
YAWN



SIGAL FINALLY REALISES THAT NO ONE IS LISTENING TO HIM —

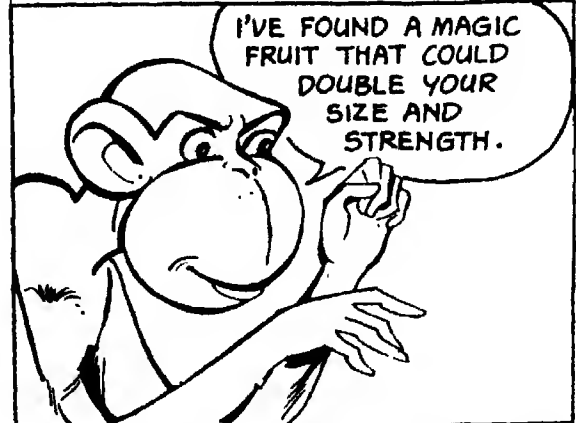
THEY'VE GONE TO SLEEP! NO MANNERS AT ALL.

NOW'S MY CHANCE.



SIGAL, I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU.

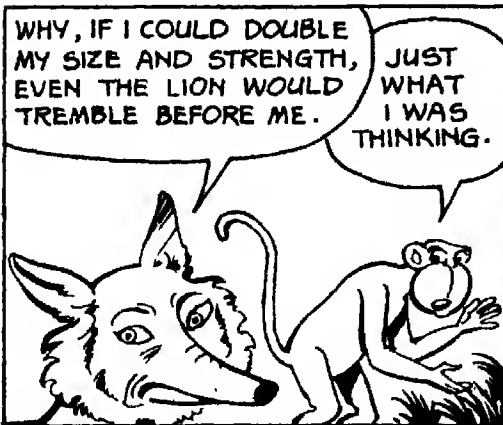
WHY?



I'VE FOUND A MAGIC FRUIT THAT COULD DOUBLE YOUR SIZE AND STRENGTH.

WHY, IF I COULD DOUBLE MY SIZE AND STRENGTH, EVEN THE LION WOULD TREMBLE BEFORE ME.

JUST WHAT I WAS THINKING.



YOU COULD EASILY TAKE HIS PLACE. HE DOESN'T HAVE HALF YOUR BRAINS.



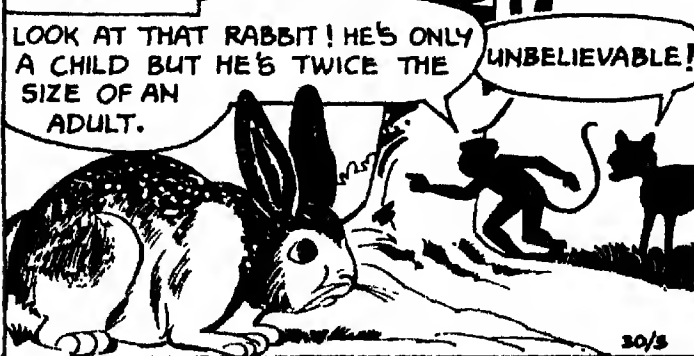
BUT HOW CAN I BELIEVE YOU?

COME I'LL SHOW YOU SOMEONE, WHO HAS EATEN THE FRUIT.



KAPISH TAKES SIGAL TO A NEARBY FIELD WHERE MOTU HAS BEEN TOLD TO SHOW HIMSELF —

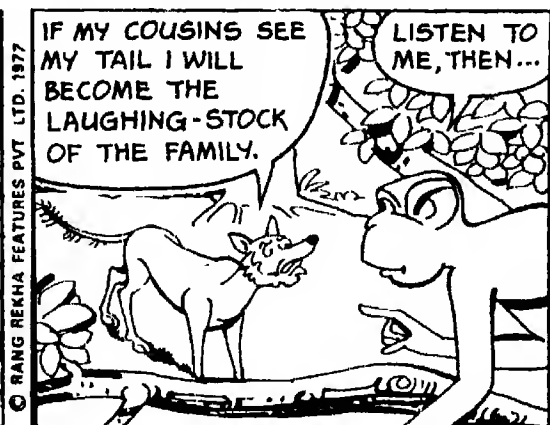
LOOK AT THAT RABBIT! HE'S ONLY A CHILD BUT HE'S TWICE THE SIZE OF AN ADULT. UNBELIEVABLE!



THAT FRUIT WORKS WONDERS

KAPISH, DEAR FRIEND, PLEASE SHOW ME WHERE THIS FRUIT GROWS.





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Writers and Their Characters

WHO TOOK ALICE TO WONDERLAND?

ALL children love to read "*Alice in Wonderland*". Although this is one of the world's most popular children's story, very few know how it came to be written.

One day, many years ago, a shy young man took three little girls rowing on the Thames river. This man's name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. He was a Professor of Mathematics at Oxford and preached in a church on Sundays.

While rowing on the Thames, he told the girls a whimsical nonsense story. It was about a little girl who went to sleep and disappeared down a rabbit hole and woke up in Wonderland. The three girls were simply delighted with the story and kept repeating the imaginative nonsensical lines:

"The time has come, the walrus said,
To talk of many things;
Of shoes, and ships, and sealing wax,
And cabbages and kings.
And why the sea is boiling hot,
And whether pigs have wings."

The girls begged the Professor to write the story for them. Just to amuse them, he sat up the whole night and wrote the tale. And since one of the little girls in the boat was named Alice, he called the story "*Alice in Wonderland*". The Professor then put the story away and forgot all about it.

Many years later, a friend of his came across the dusty old manuscript of "*Alice in Wonderland*". He read the story and was enthralled by it and wanted to get it published.

But the Professor was very indignant. He just refused to listen to the idea. What was a Professor of Mathematics at Oxford going to tell all the world when they knew that he wrote nonsense stories for children? Unthinkable! He wouldn't even dream of such a thing.

However, the Professor's friend insisted upon the story's publication. So, "*Alice in Wonderland*" was published under a pen-name—Lewis Carroll—the name which made Professor Dodgson and his story famous all over the world.

Very few people knew that the Professor of Mathematics at Oxford and Lewis Carroll were one and the same person. Queen Victoria of England read this story when she was a little girl. In fact, she was so charmed by it that, when she met Lewis Carroll, she asked him to send her a copy of his next book. A few months later, the Queen was puzzled to receive a difficult book on mathematics by Charles Lutwidge Dodgson! It was only later that the Queen came to know that it was the Professor of Mathematics himself who had authored "*Alice in Wonderland*".

Roshni Johar

Adventures of

YOU all must have read "*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*", which is generally considered as the most popular among Mark Twain's books. I'll tell you about Tom Sawyer's 'comrade', Huckleberry Finn, about whom Mark Twain wrote a separate book.

You remember Tom has a family, but Huckleberry Finn just has a drunkard father and is more or less an orphan.

Tom Sawyer's adventures wind up with Tom and Huck finding money in a cave. Judge Thatcher invests the money for the two boys, and Huck is adopted by widow Douglas.

So Huck, who is used to living in rags, not going to school, and sleeping in the woods, is now forced to live in a "sivilized" way!

Huck settles down to an orderly life in his new home. He goes to school and slowly learns to be a young 'gentleman.' But his father, a vagabond, returns to town and takes away Huck with him, swearing that he is the boss of his son. Pap, as Huck calls his father, takes him to an old cabin on the other side of the river and locks him in whenever he goes out.

Once poor Huck gets locked in for three days! So, "I made up my mind I would fix up some way to leave there," says Huck. So he finds a rusty old wood-saw without a handle and digs a tunnel under one wall, so that he can creep out of the shanty when his father locks him in. And as luck would have it, he finds an unoccupied canoe come floating down the river; Huck pulls it in and hides it among the shrubs.

In the afternoon, Pap leaves for town locking in Huck. As soon as his father disappears from sight, Huck sets to work. He drags out all the supplies of food and ammunition and some vessels, and packs them into the canoe.

But before he finally makes his escape, he kills a wild hog and hacks into its throat with an axe and lays it inside the cabin to bleed. After that he drags it into the river to drown. He even pulls out

MARK He Wrote

HUMOUR is one of the outstanding features of American literature; and Mark Twain was the greatest American humorist. He was to America what Dickens was to England: her national humorist. In his own country, Mark Twain is hailed as the Lincoln of American Literature. Abraham Lincoln, you know, was the 16th President of the United States.

Of course, Mark Twain was a pen-name. His real name was Sam Clemens. The pen-name came to him while working on the Mississippi as the pilot of a river boat. He would often hear the cry of warning, "Mark Twain", meaning "by the mark, two fathoms." Thus, he seized on the name and used it for his writings.

Mark Twain was born at Florida, Missouri, on 30th November, 1835. On leaving school, he was apprenticed to a printing press, and later worked as a compositor in newspaper offices in St. Louis, New York, and Philadelphia. But he was unable to settle and, returning to St. Louis in 1857, he worked as a pilot. When the Civil War broke out, he joined a cavalry company in the army. Invalided out after only a few months, he returned to journalism, now as a cub reporter. But he still could not settle and wandered from job to job until, in 1866, he accompanied an expedition to Hawaii as correspondent for the '*Sacramento Union*'.

On his return, he decided to lecture

TWAIN

for Boys

about his Hawaiian experiences. His lectures were a great success. He then decided to make lecturing his career. He went to Europe to find material.

Out of this tour came not only material for lectures but also his first book, *"Innocents Abroad"*, published in 1869. Immediately it became a best-seller and made him famous as a comic writer. He now decided to devote himself to writing. His second book, *"Roughing It"*, appeared in 1872 and his third, *"The Gilded Age"*, in 1873. These two books further enhanced his reputation as a humorist, but after his fourth book, *"The Adventures of Tom Sawyer"*, he was hailed as a humorous genius and the book a humorous masterpiece. The book was published over a hundred years ago, but it has retained its reputation as a great comic book. It is one of his three greatest books, the other two being *"Huckleberry Finn"* and *"Life on the Mississippi"*. *"Tom Sawyer"* is a boys' classic: one of those books which they cannot just put down. The story is full of horrors as well as joys of childhood as manifest in the pirate-Robin Hood, Tom. Tom was, of course, Sam Clemens himself and much of the book is based on the incidents of his own childhood.

Mark Twain died in 1910. He said once, "Ah, well I am a great and sublime fool. But then I am God's tool."

R. L. Khanna

Huckleberry Finn

some of his hair and sticks them on the blood smeared axe. Huck, after this achievement, says, "I did wish Tom Sawyer was there; I knowed he would take an interest in this kind of business and throw in the fancy touches."

And as soon as possible, he makes his way in the canoe to Jackson's Island. He puts up a camp there and the next morning he espies Pap, Judge Thatcher, Becky Thatcher, Joe Harper, Tom Sawyer and his old Aunt Polly, Sid and Mary, and many others in a boat searching for his body in the water!

Huck finds another fugitive on the island—Jim, the runaway negro-servant of Mrs. Watson. One day, while Huck and Jim are rowing the canoe, they see two men come running towards them and imploring them to take them on the canoe because they are being chased by angry men and blood-thirsty dogs. Huck takes them in and rows them to their tow-head. One of the men is "about seventy or upwards, and had a bald head and very gray whisker." The other fellow is younger and both of them are sloppily dressed. They have been up to some mischief and hence the chase, they explain. But Huck and Jim are very surprised when the younger chap says solemnly, "Gentlemen, I will reveal it to you, for I feel I may have confidence in you. By rights I am a duke!" But the old man is even better at surprising them, because shortly afterwards, he says, "Your eyes is lookin' at this very moment on the pore disappeared Dauphin, Looy the seventeen, son of Looy the sixteen and Marry Antonette."

And because he claims to be "the wanderin', exiled, trampled-on, and sufferin' rightful King of France (by which calculation he should have been six or seven hundred years old, at the very least)", he wants the others to go down on their knees to speak to him, always call him "Your Majesty", wait on him at meals, and not sit down in his presence till he asks them. So, Huck continues, "Jim and me set to majestyin' him, and standing up

till he told us we might set down." But later, Huck finds out that these two are mere rogues and cheats, making a living by shady means.

On their sojourn on the river, they learn about the death of a man in a neighbouring village. He, it transpires, has left behind considerable wealth and instituted two of his brothers, who are away, as guardians of his surviving daughters and the keepers of the wealth. The two adventurers immediately see their chance to make money and set about it. The "king" posing as the preacher-brother and the "duke" as the "deaf-and-dumb" brother of the dead man, they go to the village.

They are welcomed heartily by the people and they meet their "nieces" and shed many a crocodile tear. Huck, who has gone along, says, "I never see anything like it. Then one of them got on one side of the coffin and th' other on th' other side and they kneeled down and rested their forehead on the coffin and let on to pray all to themselves. Well, when it come to that, it worked the crowd like you

never see anything like it, and everybody broke down and went to sobbing right out loud—the poor girls, too.....I never see anything so disgusting."

The foolish people then hand over the money left behind by Peter Wilks, to the two frauds to caretake. All the time, the "king" goes on and on with flowery speeches of death and funerals, and the horrified Huck says, "He was the worst I ever struck."

But just then, the doctor friend of the deceased comes up and shouts, "You Peter Wilks's brother? You're a fraud, that's what you are!" But then, the people all ignore him and are full of sympathy for the grieved family.

But it is only after the funeral that the real fun begins. The frauds who plan to swindle the money from the orphaned girls are caught, all with the help of Huck.

Besides this, Huck gets into some more adventures, all of them very, very interesting. You'll have a lot of fun reading them!

Sabina Valson

BOOK REVIEWS

The Foolish Princes and the Panchatantra

By Mali—Rs. 6

Indian Myths and Legends:

Sati and Uma—Rs. 4, The Legend of Manasa Devi—Rs. 3.50

Both by Shanta Rameshwar Rao

All from Orient Longman

There are some stories that we like to hear over and over again; we can never get tired of them. Stories from the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Panchatantra* are stories that always seem new and fresh, although they were first written hundreds of years ago. It could be because these stories are full of movement, there is always action, and yes, a bit of suspense, too. But more than that, these stories are about our country, about us. When the story talks

about a forest, you know what the forest looks like. There you will find that giant banyan tree, the sturdy neem, the fragrant sandal tree. Laghupatanaka, the crow who made friends with a mouse, a deer, and a tortoise, is a Panchatantra character whom you can all recognise. The crow who caws from your gate post might be Laghupatanaka's cousin. Similarly, when you read of a 'rishi' in meditation or of Indra the raingod, you don't have to ask yourself who they are. You must have heard of them even when you were a baby, when your grandmother told you stories.

The Panchatantra stories are fables: they have a moral. Stories with morals can be very dull, but the Panchatantra, like Aesop's fables, are funny, too. You have lions who are cowardly, mice that are daring, elephants that are foolish, and

jackals that are very wily. Human beings are also shown in the same way—in fact, there is a very funny story about an emperor, who neighed like a horse because the empress wanted him to do just that!

The Panchatantra stories are stories within stories! While the main story is being told, there are a number of small stories that are told by one character or the other. It can be confusing if you read the stories too fast and if you skip the long names like I tend to do. But, if you are greedy about stories, then you can have a long, browsing time with the Panchatantra characters. They are so alive.

The legends about our gods are more difficult to understand. In the Panchatantra, you are told what is good and what is bad—betraying a friend is bad, being foolish and not using your common sense can cost you your life. But in the story of 'Manasa Devi' and in the legend of 'Sati and Uma', you will often find yourself puzzled. Is this how gods act? How can a god, who is kind, also destroy? How are gods different from human beings when they, too, feel afraid? If a man like Chand Saudagar in 'The Legend of Manasa Devi' can bring dead things back to life, is he not a god?

Now, I think the first thing you have to remember when you read these stories is that they talk not only of the spirit of God, the Being that has created us, whom we worship. They also talk of the thirty-three crores of gods that inhabit the seven worlds. Some are less than man, some greater. Some are evil, possessed by self love, like Daksha and Taraka. Others like Indra (the god of rain), Vasanta (the god of spring), Kama (the god of love) bring good to those on earth. But whatever they are, they, like us, can feel grief, can feel happiness, and know fear.

I do not want to tell you of the legends of 'Manasa Devi' and 'Sati and Uma' here, because they have been told so well by Shanta Rameshwar Rao. It is difficult to tell these stories in English, but she has done it so that you can identify yourself completely even with Shiva when he loses his wife, Sati, and know what it means to be enclosed in pain. Her storytelling is compelling; you cannot put the book away before you have finished the

story.

What our legends teach us, I think, is that we have no right to judge others, no, not even the gods.

The Moody Peacock and Other Stories

Retold by Mohini Bakshi

Rs. 12.50

Dr. Bhondoo Dentist and Other Stories

By Aroon Purie

Rs. 12.50

Both by Thomson Press, New Delhi

These books are for those who have begun to love reading and yet like to look at pictures, too. The stories are all animal stories, but the animals behave very much like human beings. The lazy peacock is like those of us who do not like to study for our exams but would like to come first in the class. Bhondoo the monkey makes a mess with paints and has a wonderful time, much as we would like to do. In fact, Bhondoo is such a lovable duffy tuffy of a monkey that you, I'm sure, would want him as a pet. So do I.

The colourful pictures in both the books are excellent. The ones in 'Dr. Bhondoo Dentist' are so good that I did not even need to read the words to know the story. The illustrations themselves told the story.

If you have a younger brother or sister or a friend whose birthday is not far off, you could think of these books as gifts. I'm sure they will like them very much, but if they too, like you and me, want Bhondoo the monkey as a pet, what then?

Brain Teasers—Science

By Dillip M. Salwi

Rs. 6.50

Macmillan

Your Chirstmas vacation is over, but you could, I am sure, find some time for this book. It would help for the exams, too. The author has devised a set of puzzles, quizzes, and problems that will start you off on an exciting discovery of scientific knowledge, physics, chemistry, biology, everything. For instance, what are these apparatuses that you would find in the chemistry laboratory? Can you recognise them? 1. BERCCILU. 2. EBRUETT. 3.

PDOIRT (page 13). No, I shall not tell you.

There are also crossword puzzles that would be fun to fill. There is a puzzle that is shaped like an aeroplane, another like a spaceship, a third like a Nobel Laureate's Medal! Of course, the trouble with crosswords are that once you fill them, you cannot use them again, but I am sure you will be able to make puzzles of your own, on the same lines. It is not difficult, if you know the answers to your own clues.

The author has kept the book simple and easy to understand. There are, I must admit, some puzzles that read like questions in your textbooks: Who invented a railway engine, steam boat, rocket (page 44). But this should not dampen your spirits. There are always things that you have to know by heart, whether you like it or not. How would you know your address, for instance, if you did not learn it?

Take your time over the book; do not try all the quizzes, all at once. Save some up for one of those days when nothing, not even lunch, is exciting.

A.S.G.

Bulbul Activity Books : Telling the Time, Measurement, Plus Minus, and Shapes,
Thomson Press, New Delhi.
Rs. 2 each

These books, all prepared by Indi Rana and illustrated by S.N. Chatterjee and Jayanthi David, Rakesh Kumar, Harinder Singh, and Subrata Basu respectively, are based on the premise that children learn better through their own experience and activity rather than by being taught or told answers in a lesson, in which they have a more or less passive role.

All four books deal with basic concepts — the concepts needed to tell the time, understand measurements, shapes, and the basic principle of addition and subtraction. These have been repeated over and over again, in various ways, so that the child might grasp them for himself.

The idea is certainly commendable and the books are likely to prove both attractive and helpful to children. Learning has almost been turned into a game which will specially appeal to all intelligent children and may prove a boon to teachers who want to prove that 'learning is fun'.

One cannot but notice certain oddities and errors, however, which, considering the fact that the books

are meant for very young ones, no author can afford to be careless about. For instance, it is certainly odd, to say the least, to show a child having breakfast soon after waking up, and brushing his teeth only afterwards. It is hardly correct to say that a metre is a "unit which measures length." It is a unit that might very well measure the breadth or width or height as well. So it would be more correct to say that it is a unit that measures the distance between two points. It is equally absurd to say that "an eye is round". It ought to be the "eyeball" and not the "eye". A rectangle is not necessarily made of two squares as suggested, as the very first diagram shows. The problems and answers in PLUS MINUS ought to have been on facing pages to make comprehension easier for the child.

More care should have been taken in preparing squares or boxes for children to fill in in the exercises. For example: "NIGHT TIME" has been given 10 squares instead of 9; "EATING" has 7 boxes instead of 6. (TELLING THE TIME).

Can't pictures be drawn more accurately? The dial on the clock, on the page devoted to 2 o'clock, shows 2 in the place of 12 (TELLING THE TIME). Mrs Thingamni (what a name!) weighs 125 (units) — pounds or kilos? If it's only 125 lb, it cannot be 'FAT' enough. And if it's 125 kilos, Mrs Thingamni needs to be redrawn! And, look at the weighing machine: the scale has not been properly divided. The division is by 20s till 100 and by 10s from then on. The first picture of a calendar does not mention Wednesday, but has two Thursdays! (MEASUREMENT)

A general lack of care for correct expressions and usage is also seen in all four books. For example:

"For 'curvy' (curved) things, use a string"—Why should one measure both the length and width of a square? The very first theory taught about the square is that its two sides are equal — The 'height' of a window is generally the height from the floor; 'width' is correctly used in the exercise on the same page, though 'length' is seen changed to 'height' — In 'I am units high', the box should have been placed before 'units' and not after. Compare: 'He is (box) units high' — 'Did you need string to measure "this"' (showing buildings); and 'Did you need string to measure "this"' (showing 3 sadhus) could have been corrected. (MEASUREMENT)

In two diagrams, the reading in the thermometer is shown in Fahrenheit, instead of the metric Celsius or centigrade. Moreover, the 'normal' temperature in Fahrenheit is wrongly given as 98.6° instead of 98.4° (MEASUREMENT).

Also expressions like: "What (how much) does Seth Kishori Mall's rice weigh?" (MEASUREMENT) — "Add A+B. What (how many) do you

get?" (PLUS MINUS) – "How many circles can you see in (on) it" (referring to picture of an owl) – "How many squares are there in (to) a box?" – "How many stars on Deepak's Divali cracker (crackers, because there are two in his hands)? (SHAPES)

Finally, how will an Indian child like to correlate the term 'INDIAN' with the picture of a Red Indian?

The illustrations in both SHAPES and MEASUREMENT are generally delightful, especially the riddles provided in the former. TELLING THE TIME has also been attractively designed. The illustrations in PLUS MINUS, however, are crude and unattractive, though some of the ideas are interesting.

The Monkey and the Mango Tree and Other Stories

The Eagle King and Other Stories.

Both by Chameli and Ramachandran

Thomson Press, New Delhi

Rs. 12.50 each

The two collections, containing three short stories each, are delightfully told and are likely to be

hailed by junior readers, just learning to read for themselves.

The Eagle King and *The Sad Little Princess* unfold two age-old morals without being preachy. *The Caterpillar Who Wanted Wings* is an attractive lesson in natural history; *The Monkey and the Mango Tree* and *The Cunning Jackal* provide good laughs, while *The Magic Puppets* – a story told in verse (which, unfortunately, is often jerky) – has an interesting theme.

The main attraction of the books, however, lie in the illustrations rather than the script. All the pictures are bright and profoundly colourful – two things particularly dear to children. The most outstanding are the illustrations of the Magic Puppets. The idea of placing real-life photographs along with the pictorial depictions is both striking and effective.

Bublee

THE TWO SISTERS

(Continued from page 19)

a mere animal!" When the banyan tree asked her to clean up the place, she stuck out her tongue and said, "Clean your own mess!" When the horse asked for water, she gave it a kick of contempt and ran on.

At last, she reached the old woman in the moon and as the old dame did not look up, Sukhu gave her an impatient push. The old woman looked up, surprised. Sukhu made a rude face at her and said, "Get up, old fool! And give me all the things that you've given to that silly Dukhu."

"What a rude, ill-mannered child!" said the old woman in amazement. Then she turned to Sukhu and said, "Very well, but you go and have a bath and eat first." She gave Sukhu the directions about the pool and the two rooms.

Sukhu grabbed the most expensive clothes and made for the pool. The first two dips made her wise and beautiful. The third one gave her fine jewellery. But a naughty impulse, which even her newly acquired wisdom could not drown, made her take

yet another dip, in the hope of getting more. But this dip instead made her the ugliest girl in the world, with all her wisdom gone and her jewels turning into tattered rags. Wild and enraged, Sukhu took yet another dip. This time her ugly body was covered with sores and pimples. Screaming and sobbing, Sukhu went to the old woman and called her the rudest names for doing this to her.

But the old woman shook her head and said that she had nothing to do with it, for had she not specifically forbidden Sukhu to take more than three dips in the pool? "Greed always brings its own punishment!" she said to Sukhu.

"Give me the casket, you horrid old woman!" said Sukhu, "and mind you, give me a bigger one than Dukhu's."

"The caskets are all there," said the old woman pointing to a corner. "You can take whichever you like."

Sukhu picked up the biggest casket and ran off without even thanking the old woman.

On her way home, the horse saw her and

pushed her into a ditch. Covered with mud, Sukhu got up crying. When she passed the banyan tree, an enormous branch broke and fell on top of her, hurting her badly, while the cow chased her so fiercely that Sukhu ran home, panting for breath.

Her mother screamed when she saw Sukhu in that terrible state. But she was somehow consoled when she saw the enormous casket. "I'm sure it contains a fortune!" she cried, her eyes shining with

greed. "Now we're going to be richer than Dukhu and her mother. We'll show them!"

But the casket had no money. When they opened it, a huge cobra crawled out and chased them. Sukhu and her mother ran for their lives till they went out of the village. And they never dared to come back again!

*(A Folk Tale from Bengal
Retold by Swapna Dutta)*

RAMU IN ORBIT

(Continued from page 16)

The crew on board, except Padma, felt betrayed that someone else should have snatched away a prize they thought was legitimately theirs. They called the other craft's action as space piracy.

However, that was no time for petty emotions. The warning bells rang. The calculations by Mission Control's computers concluded that having jettisoned the slab, Trivikrama might even harm the spacecraft near it.

The needles in the radiation sensors strained to indicate a build-up of radioactivity in the region. Experts from different nations met to consider the situation. Their decision was unanimous. The Mission must be called off!

Within seconds, Cauvery's control room echoed the instructions: "Abandon Mis-

sion. Start operation X".

It meant starting retro-fire and switching on special devices to ward off any harmful radiation. There was no time to be wasted. Those on board knew what to do on such occasions. The drill had been rehearsed perhaps a hundred times in simulated chambers on earth.

Everyone pressed the allotted buttons. The sequence was automatic within three seconds. Then, the spacecraft had to make one full orbit to return to the same position.

The patience of the aliens seemed to have ended. The wrath of the celestial beings was fully turned on the earthly 'intruders'.

*Mohan Sundara Rajan
(To be continued)*

HOW and WHY

Sukhbir Singh Bhatia, New Delhi, asks:

Why do metals possess positive valencies and non-metals negative valencies?

The answer to this question can be found by looking at the electronic structure of metals and non-metals. I shall illustrate with the simple example of Sodium (Na) and Chlorine (Cl) atoms which, when combined, form crystals of the common eating salt we are all so familiar with.

Na has only one electron in its outermost shell, which needs seven more to saturate it. Obviously, a Na atom can lose this electron with greater ease than find seven other electrons to saturate it! When the electron (which is of negative charge)

is lost, the originally neutral atom becomes one up in positive charge. This is what actually happens. Whether you call it positive or negative, valency is a matter of definition. Scientists have chosen to call this behaviour a demonstration of positive valency.

Exactly opposite is true for chlorine. Chlorine has seven electrons in its outermost orbit and easily gains an outside electron to satisfy it. By doing this, chlorine becomes negatively charged and is, therefore, by convention stated to have negative valency.

Meera Ramakrishnan



ORPHEUS



THE legendary Orpheus, son of the Thracian king Ocagrus and the muse Calliope, was the greatest poet and musician who ever lived. The god Apollo presented him with a lyre, and the Muses themselves taught him to play it. The music he drew forth from his lyre was so wonderful that it not only charmed wild animals, but even caused the stones and trees to move and follow the sound of his music. It is said that at Zone in Thrace, several oaks are still standing in the order of one of his dances.

However, in spite of this marvellous gift of his, Orpheus's life story is a tragic

one. He married a beautiful girl called Eurydice, and for a time they lived happily together. But one day, near Tempe, in the valley of the river Peneus, Eurydice encountered Aristaeus, who tried to abduct her. Repulsing him, she fled in terror, but in her headlong flight, not seeing where she was going, she trod on a snake, which bit her, and caused her death.

Orpheus, who was inconsolable at his beloved wife's untimely death, determined to recover her. With exemplary courage, he braved the horrors and dangers of Hell, and descended into Tartarus. There his music so charmed the ferryman Charon,

the savage three-headed dog Cerberus, the three judges of the dead, and even the redoubtable Hades himself, that the latter's heart positively softened, hearing the plaintive strains of his music, and he agreed to let Eurydice return to the world of the living. Orpheus's beautiful music saved him from all dangers, and even temporarily stopped the tortures of the damned.

Hades, however, warned Orpheus that on no account was he to look back, until Eurydice had reached the safety of the sunlight above. Orpheus readily agreed to this condition, and playing on his lyre, started back along the dark passages. Eurydice followed him, guided by the music he made. As long as they were in the underworld, Orpheus obeyed Hades's injunction, but as soon as *he* reached the light, he looked back, without waiting for his wife to reach the sunlight, and thus lost her forever.

Griefstricken, he returned to Thrace, where he served as a temple priest to Apollo. He taught the sacred mysteries, and condemned the practice of sacrificial killing. Every morning, he would greet the dawn, praising Apollo and lauding

him as the greatest of all gods. When the god Dionysus invaded Thrace, Orpheus refused to honour him and continued extolling Apollo. Furious at this insult, Dionysus set his female followers, the Maenads (whom he often inflicted with a terrible madness), to kill him. Waiting till their husbands were in the temple with Orpheus, they picked up the arms stacked outside, and rushing in, slaughtered their husbands first, then brutally attacked and dismembered Orpheus. They threw his head into the river Hebrus, from where it floated down, still singing, to the island of Lesbos.

Tearfully the Muses collected and buried his severed limbs at Leibethra, where the nightingales sing sweeter than anywhere else.

Orpheus's head continued to sing and prophesy, till Apollo, finding his own oracles deserted, commanded it to be silent. His lyre, which had also drifted to Lesbos, was placed in the heavens, as a starry constellation (Lyra), when the Muses interceded with Zeus.

*(Retold from Greek Mythology
by Geeta Chowdhry)*

THE TEMPLE

The peaceful temple bell rang,
and the birds sang,
the sweet flowers' scent
made me think this world was a dreamland.
In morning, evening, or at night,
the temple has a holy light.
The water nearly kept on hushing,
as the peace and splendour
kept on rushing.
The holy temple standing
for years and years,
nothing to hide, nothing to fear.

*Alpana Ansal (12)
India*

THE VETERANS

The long sturdy trees
Stood there for years,
Their barks are cragged and dry,
But still bears
The hardships of life,
Painful life,
Life so dear.

*Suman Gupta (11)
India*

WHO HAS SEEN THE GOD ?

Who has seen the God?
Neither I nor you:
But when we are in meditation,
His grace is passing through.
Who has seen the God?
Neither you nor I:
But when we do a good deed,
His blessing is assured by.

*Gokul C. Verma (10)
India*

THE WORLD

Oh! the world with its never-ceasing wonders,
Has really attracted me to its bosom,
The mountains, the seas, the rivers,
I'm never tired of exclaiming over them!
I'm glad to have been born in this world,
To be born with several others,
And enjoy a life of wonders with them,
And happiness the world or me smother!

*Sudha Sundaram
India*

Test Cricket's Finest Rear-guard Action

THE 1902 Oval encounter between England and Australia was, in the opinion of cricket's ace historian Harry Altham, "the most sensational Test Match in history". This was brought about with an innings of the most awesome magnitude from the blade of Gilbert Jessop. It was a knock that altered the very complexion of the game, turning an almost certain and overwhelming defeat into a glorious and spectacular victory.

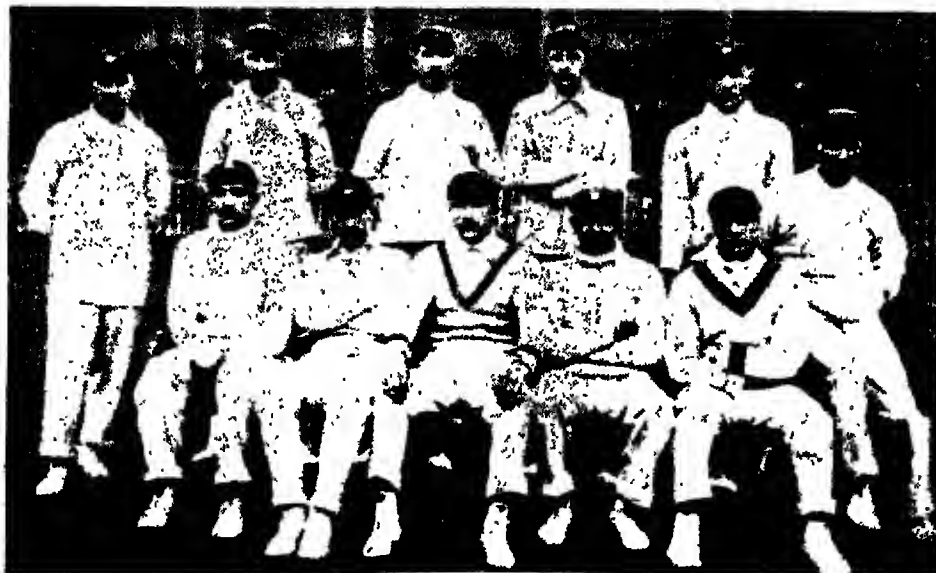
This 1902 series was one of the best fought and most closely contested of Test rubbers. In the first Test at Birmingham, England fielded what to this day is believed to be its strongest combination. Totalling 376, this side skittled the might of Australia for just 36, its lowest-ever Test total. Rain, however, saved them from a humiliating defeat, the weather again intervening at Lord's where only 100 minutes' play was possible. At Sheffield, the Aussies won fairly and squarely by 143, but in the fourth game at Manchester, England can be

considered decidedly unlucky to lose by just 3 runs, a defeat brought about by astonishing selectorial blunders.

Thus, by the time the Oval Test came around, the Ashes were already safe in Australia's kitty. England sensibly rectified its former blunders by bringing in Jessop and George Hirst, two men whose courage, skill and ingenuity brought home the bacon on the last day.

Australian captain Joe Darling won the toss and on a good and true pitch, his team batted out the entire first day to reach a highly satisfactory total of 324 all out. At one stage, they were in dire trouble at 4 for 82, but a typical Australian fightback led by tailenders Hopkins (40) and Trumble (64 not out) saw them through against some hostile left-arm swing bowling from George Hirst. Hirst bowled 29 overs, gave away 77 runs, but accounted for the cream of Australian batsmanship: he clean bowled Trumper, Hill, and Gregory, while Duff and Darling were caught behind.

The 1902 English team, known as the Golden Eleven. Left to right (back row): G.H. Hirst, A.A. Lilley, W.H. Lockwood, L.C. Braund, W.R. Rhodes, and J.T. Tyldesley; (front row): C.B. Fry, F.S. Jackson, A.C. MacLaren, K.S. Ranjitsinhji, and G.L. Jessop.



Heavy rain in the early hours of the second day automatically over-ruled any chance that England had of matching the Australian score. Wickets fell with distressing regularity to the impeccable fastish off-spin bowling of Hugh Trumble, who bowled unchanged throughout the innings to return the remarkable analysis of 31-13-65--8. Six wickets had fallen for a mere 83, when Hirst and Braund added 54. Hirst was out after an attacking innings of 43. Thirtyeight runs were still needed to avoid the follow-on, on the enforcement of which England would have died a swift death, when fast bowler Lockwood (25) helped the painstaking Braund (22 in 90 minutes) and averted it. England were thankful for the 183 runs they had succeeded on collecting under the circumstances, and even though they had a leeway of 141 runs to cover up, the start of the Australian innings furnished them with some hopes.

Ace batsman Victor Trumper was run out for 2, and with Lockwood finding his best fast bowling form, Australia were hard put to gather runs. They were eventually dismissed for 121 (Lockwood 5 wickets for 45 runs) and England now needed 263 runs to win the match, a very tall order on a worn and damaged pitch but not altogether impossible.

What little hopes England harboured disappeared, however, when the clouds opened again in the night prior to the final day. Jessop himself tells in his autobiography how he, with a couple of colleagues, was dining at the Great Central Hotel and how they could see the stars atwinkle in a clear sky. They had scarcely reached the end of their repast when they all sat bolt upright. It was the rain, the dreaded rain that would rob England of whatever chance it had, or so it seemed. The rain disappeared as suddenly as it had appeared, but the damage had been done. Pungent words were exchanged on the atrocious behaviour of the weather when Jessop, to raise drooping spirits, offered to bet ten to one that he would get a fifty, and twenty to one for a hundred. "As this seemed such a clear case of money for nothing," Jessop wryly observes, "the offer was snatched up immediately."

The next day dawned hot and glorious,

but England were immediately in dire trouble on a sticky wicket against the deadly bowling of Trumble and Saunders. Saunders clean-bowled the first three batsmen—and the total was just 10! The fourth wicket fell at 31 and half the side had been sent back for only 48 runs. It was at this desperate stage that Jessop strode out to join a masterful Stanley Jackson and star in the finest rear-guard action in Test cricket history. He came in with 20 minutes to go for lunch and went for the bowling at once with his customary gusto. Aided by some initial luck, Jessop came in with 29 to his name at lunch, Jackson being unbeaten at 39.

After lunch, Jessop returned to launch a fierce counter-attack that completely demoralised the Australian bowling. He hit the ball with such quelling power and certain grace that length bowling lost all its meaning and field-setting became a puerile exercise. Try what they might, the Australians could not stem the flow of runs. Good-length balls were hooked, cut



George Hirst

and driven in turns as the fancy seized him, and the Aussies could do little except fetch and carry. At one point, he hit Saunders for four boundaries and a single in succession. It was as if an ominously silent volcano had suddenly erupted with a ven-

geance and was now venting its fury with redoubled violence. Jessop raced to his fifty in what was, for him, a fairly slow time of 55 minutes. With the score at 157 Jackson left, the pair having put on 109 runs in just 65 minutes to change the complexion of the game. Jessop continued to hit out with gay abandon in company with George Hirst and was finally out with the total at 187, having hit 104 out of 139 scored while he was at the crease in 75 minutes with a five, 17 4s, 2 3s, 4 2s, and 17 singles—the fastest century in Anglo-Australian cricket to this day. “All things considered,” wrote WISDEN, “a more astonishing display has never been seen. What he did would have been scarcely possible under the same circumstances to any other living batsman.”

Though the game had made a complete volte-face, English troubles were still very far from being over. Seventy-six runs were still needed with only three tail-end wickets in hand, and at this delicate stage, George Hirst took complete charge of the situation and weighed in with yet another sterling performance. While Lockwood scored only 2, Hirst with audacious stroke-play added 25, and then put on 34 runs for the ninth wicket with Dick Lilley (16).

With 15 runs needed to win the game, Wilfred Rhodes joined his fellow Yorkshireman at the crease. Hirst, it is said, met him on the way to the middle and said, “We’ll get ‘em in singles, Wilf.” The pair then set about the task with typical grit and levelled the score. Then Rhodes pushed a ball from Trumble between the bowler and mid-on, and England had romped home by just one wicket, a victory that will be remembered as long as cricket is played.

George Hirst, of course, gave as great a performance as Jessop in the match and if this is remembered as “Jessop’s Test”, it was also, almost to the same degree, Hirst’s. The Yorkshire left-arm bowler and right-hand batsman took 5-77 and 2-7, and hit 43 (highest) and 58 not out (second highest) in two innings.

It was in this astounding manner that England won a Test that, when 3 wickets were lost for 10 runs, the most ardent English cricket enthusiast had given up for lost. But there was at least one champion

in the opposition camp whose genius and toil could not salvage the match. Six feet six inches tall, Hugh Trumble scored 64 not out and 7 not out, and bowled unchanged throughout the match to return figures of 8-65 and 4-108. So much for lost causes!

Mahiyar D. Morawalla

TEST YOUR WITS

1. Which hog resembles a man?
2. Which mare can never be ridden?
3. Which city can never be visited?
4. Which nut can never be fitted into a bolt?
5. What has got a mouth but cannot speak?
6. Which island is never surrounded by water?
7. Which stars are never found in the sky?
8. Why should you never believe a lion’s den?
9. Why is a gun like a boss?
10. Who gets engaged but never marries?
11. Which milk do cows and buffaloes not produce?
12. What bird resembles a human being and is unable to fly?
13. In which bank can you never deposit your money?
14. What is found in every letter?
15. Which jam can never be eaten?

Asha Prabhu
India

RIDDLE-ME-REE

1. Where was Moses when the candle went out?
2. What’s the difference between a hill and a pill?
3. When can three fat women go under one small umbrella and not get wet?
4. When does a leopard change his spots?
5. What has a mouth but never eats?

S. Jayshree
India

Test Your Wits:
1. A road hog, 2. A nightmare, 3. Electricity, 4. The nut behind a steering wheel, 5. A river, 6. A traffic island, 7. Film stars, 8. Because it is a jar, 9. It can fire, 10. A phone, 11. Milk of Magnesia, 12. A jail-bird, 13. River bank, 14. Vowels, 15. Traffic jam.
Riddle-me-ree:
1. In the dark, 2. A hill is hard to get up and a pill is hard to get down, 3. When it is not raining, 4. When he moves to another, 5. A river.

ANSWERS



Red wheels' friend bunny and the dog next door

ONE bright sunny morning, Red Wheels waited and waited for Bunttoo to come and give him his morning rub. But no, the sun climbed higher and higher into the sky and there was still no Bunttoo in sight.

Then, there was a sound at the garage door. Ah! There he was, with the dreaded red-and-white checked duster. Red Wheels hated being scrubbed clean, as a rule, but he always enjoyed the arguments he had with Bunttoo during the morning rubs. Now, he pretended to frown at Bunttoo.

But what was wrong? Bunttoo had a very worried look on his face. He didn't even smile at Red Wheels, but started to wipe him all over so glumly that Red Wheels actually forgot to complain!

Even when Mynah, the little brown bird who lived on the tree outside, hopped into the garage and on to Red Wheels' bonnet to wish them both her customary cheerful 'Good morning Cheeep', Bunttoo only mumbled back 'Good morning' and went on rubbing.

Finally, Red Wheels could contain himself no longer. "What is it?" he burst out. "What's happened?"

Bunttoo threw down the duster and looked glummer still. "I'm worried," he said, "very, very worried....."

Mynah hopped closer to him. She was beginning to look glum, too. Red Wheels asked, "But what's the matter?"

Bunttoo said, "It's Pussy, you know....."

I'm so worried about her...she's getting lazier, day by day...not only that, you must've noticed.... she's getting fatter, too...and no wonder, she does nothing all day but sleep and she eats as much as ever.... but oh! The worst is...the worst is..." he clasped his hands together and looked very, very worried indeed.

"Yes.... what's the worst?" prompted Mynah curiously.

"The worst is.... last night, while she was lying on the rug after her saucerful of milk and I was sitting reading in the armchair, up came a little mouse on tip-toe right up to her nose and stood there. And Pussy.... Pussy...only opened one eye, looked at the mouse, and shut it again.... simply because she is too fat and lazy and sleepy.... Oh! she should be ashamed of herself! Just imagine.... a cat not chasing a mouse!"

Red Wheels said, "Yes...even I have been noticing that she sleeps almost all the time. Even when she is awake, she's always sleepy and yawning....and she grumbles when you talk to her..."

Mynah added, "And these days, she never even chases me.... in the old days, we used to have such great fun...Pussy and I.... But nowadays, she's always fast asleep on the wall. ...Oh! What a bore!"

Bunttoo had picked up the duster and was absent-mindedly rubbing Red Wheels so hard that he squeaked aloud. Bunttoo absent-mindedly said "Sorry" and went

on rubbing harder. Red Wheels got so annoyed that he ran over Buntoo's foot. Buntoo shrieked in anguish, threw down the duster, and picked up his throbbing foot. "You horrid car, why did you have to do that? You're the most inconsiderate car I've ever met...."

"Say sorry," said Red Wheels with a wicked smile. "Or I'll run over your other foot.... why did you rub me so hard.... ouch, I still hurt! Quick! Say sorry....!"

"Sorry!" yelled Buntoo, hurriedly. "Now, are you satisfied? Really, you have some cheek...I must say...ouch!" He hopped around on one foot. "And all because of you...."

Mynah said, "Now stop quarrelling, both of you! It doesn't solve anybody's problems. Come on, what about a drive? Anybody game?"

"Me!" yelled Red Wheels.

"Great!" yelled Buntoo, forgetting completely about his hurt foot. He even forgot to rub the rest of Red Wheels, and instead, ran off to tell his mother that they were all going for a drive.

Red Wheels rolled out of his garage with Buntoo inside and Mynah perched atop his bonnet. They all caught sight of Pussy stretched out on the front steps in a patch of sunlight. Buntoo had been right. Pussy was really fatter than ever....so fat that she couldn't even curl up as cats usually do. Instead, she lay in a plump roll, spread out on her stomach.

Red Wheels called out, "Hey, Pussy, want to come on a drive with us?"

Pussy grumbled in her sleep and woke up. She stared dazed at Red Wheels, Buntoo and Mynah, then opened her tiny pink mouth wide to show her pearly white teeth and pink tongue in a large sleepy yawn. "Oh! go away"....she purred and went back to sleep again.

Buntoo was looking worried, again. "See.....I told you....."

Mynah said, "Let me try...." She called out, "Pussy...there's a mouse just behind you! Quick!"

Pussy opened one eye and twitched the end of her tail very slightly. "Huh!" They

heard her say before she was asleep again.

"You're right," said Mynah. "What shall we do?"

"Let's think about it," suggested Buntoo. So they all thought hard, as Red Wheels ran on and on down the road. In fact, they were all thinking so hard, that they did not even notice the sparrow family twittering "hello" to them. They still had green feet, left over from the time when they had perched upon Red Wheels' wet green paint, taking him to be a tree.

As they neared the bend of the road, suddenly a queer little procession crossed their way, just outside their neighbour's house. The neighbours were an elderly retired man and his wife, who lived by themselves most of the time except at vacation-time when their grandchildren came to visit them.

Buntoo, Mynah and Red Wheels stared at the queer little procession. First, a little brown-and-tan furry silkie sidney came trotting out by the gate. He was followed by a little browned boy, also trotting fast. Then came the elderly retired man, whose grandson was the little boy. Then, hurrying behind them, scrambling to keep her hairpins in place was his little plump wife with a picnic basket hung over her arm. The four trotted down the road at a rapid pace, almost falling over themselves at every step.

Red Wheels 'beeped' and stopped beside them. Buntoo leaned over and said, "Good morning, everybody! You all seem in a great hurry...."

Grandfather Berry, whose name it was, paused for breath. "Oh! no.....we're not... puff...in a hurry.... we're just...puff... puff...puff...going for a small picnic...puff...puff... but you see,...puff...puff...Birbal...he's my grandson's dog...is walking so... puff...puff...fast...that we all have to run to keep up...puff...puff!"

"We'll take you wherever you want to go...." offered Buntoo.

"Thank you," said Grandfather Berry, very politely. "Stop, Dhun...! Stop, Birbal!"

Birbal obeyed so suddenly that they all bumped into one another. Then, they all

got into the car and Red Wheels drove on till they reached a little clearing on the very edge of the neighbouring woods and decided to have a small picnic, right there.

Oh! But they had fun and later, Birbal, Buntoo, Dhun, Mynah, and Red Wheels played 'Chase'. Red Wheels kept getting

caught because he was so much larger than the rest of them. Birbal could run and dodge so fast that they could never catch him easily. And Mynah would fly off to an overhanging branch and swing back and forth, as they all protested, "That's not fair. That's cheating!"

Then it was time to return home.

"Thank you for a very nice drive," said Dhun, very politely.

"And thank you for letting us join in the picnic," said Buntoo, Mynah, and Red Wheels.

Only Birbal sulked. He didn't want to part from his new friends. So, when they drove off, back to Buntoo's house, he ran after them, without anybody noticing him.

"Oh!" said Buntoo. "We clean forgot about Pussy. We didn't even discuss her. What do we do?"

They all thought hard. But by that time, they had all reached home and Pussy was still fast asleep on the front steps, looking fatter than ever.

Nobody noticed that Birbal had followed them home. He nosed around in the garden, where he could get such exciting smells. Ah! How much more interesting than the garden, next door....

Suddenly, he noticed Pussy, fast asleep a few yards away. Good Heavens, what was that plump bundle of fur? It moved a little, so he moved closer to get a better look at it.

Pussy suddenly opened one eye and saw Birbal nosing her. Her eye grew large and round and she even opened her other eye. Then she jumped up faster than anyone had seen her do for a long, long time now and was gone in a flash.

Birbal stared in disbelief. Where did this funny creature disappear to? He ran off in the direction he had seen her go and found her perched on the window-sill. Oh! she is a cat! He barked joyously and stood up and scratched at the window-ledge. Pussy gave him a nasty glare and a hiss, jumped down and lumbered across to her favourite wall by the gate. He ran after her and she jumped down and tried to run up a tree. But she had lost practice



in climbing trees and just as Birbal was almost at her heels, she tore across the yard, round and round in never ending circles, until Birbal's head reeled. But he kept on snapping at her heels until, finally, she charged back to the wall and clambered up. Birbal gave an exasperated snap and caught the tip of her tail in his mouth. Pussy screamed at him and hissed and snarled in her most war-like wail. But he wouldn't let go.....

Buntoo heard the noise and came running to see what the matter was. Mynah flew with him to where Birbal and Pussy were having their tug of war. Red Wheels didn't want to be left behind, so he came, too.

There stood Birbal holding tight to the

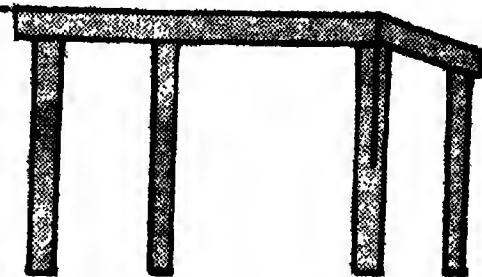
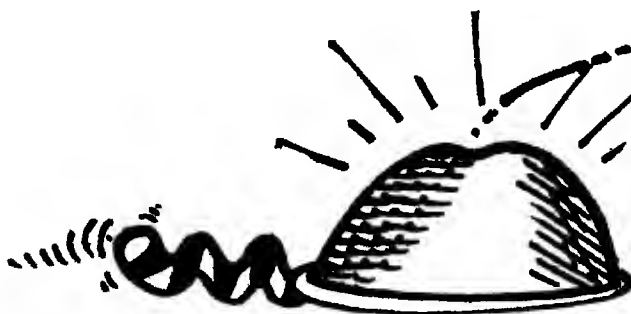
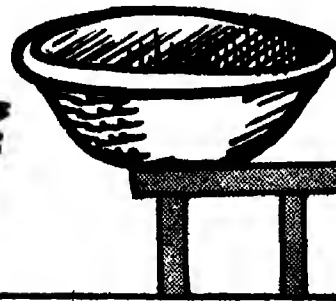
tip of Pussy's tail while she hissed and spat and swiped a pawful of claws at him. But Birbal wouldn't let go.

"Stop!" cried Buntoo. "Let go, Birbal! Bad dog!" He lunged at Birbal. Pussy pulled her tail away and escaped up the tree. Mynah sat on a branch and laughed and laughed till a feather fell off. Red Wheels laughed so much that his hooter sounded 'beep beep' all by itself. He jumped up and down, still very amused. "Just look at Pussy!" he spluttered. "Birbal made her run, after all."

They all burst out laughing, at the thought. They could hear Pussy grumbling from somewhere among the branches above them.

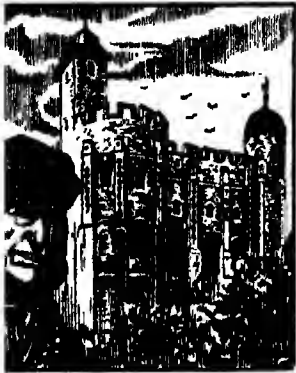
Padmini Rao

ANIMAL WORLD



MONA:

FAMOUS MYSTERIES—I:



THERE can be no more pathetic and heartrending story in British history than that of the two little princes in the Tower. Suspect No. 1 for their tragic end in 1483 has always been King Richard III, traditionally portrayed by historians and writers, above all by Shakespeare, as a monster of unparalleled wickedness.

Some modern historians, however, feel that he was maligned by political propaganda, and point out that there is no firm evidence of his guilt. The two princes had simply disappeared. And it was only in 1674 that a wooden chest containing the skeletons of two children came to be discovered underneath a stone

staircase in the White Tower, London.

When Edward IV died, his son and heir, 12-year-old Prince Edward, was at Ludlow in Shropshire, where his father had made him titular ruler of Wales and the border regions. The king had also made his brother, Richard of Gloucester, protector of his heir and the realm.

With a long history of rivalry, intrigue and treachery already behind them, the different factions fought a vicious battle for power around the boy king, who was dominated by his mother's family, the powerful Woodvilles. Richard settled things by arresting and later executing most of their leaders.



THE young king protested bravely, but Richard declared that there had been a plot against his life. He took the king and his younger brother, Richard, into custody, and put them in the Tower of London, which at that time was used both as a royal residence, as well as a royal prison.

Richard now persuaded London preachers to announce that Edward IV's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville had been invalid and his offspring, therefore, were illegitimate. Richard, consequently, was his brother's rightful successor. On June 25, the day set for young Edward's coronation, an assembly of lords and commons endorsed these claims and Richard

usurped the throne.

The coronation of Richard and Queen Anne on July 6, was an occasion of great splendour, with extra forces in the capital to prevent any counter-coup. The populace accepted him, believing him to be capable and fearful of the problems of a long minority if Edward were to become king.

As for the young princes in the Tower, they were reported to have been kept in stricter confinement. At first they could be seen shouting and playing in the garden, then day by day, more rarely, behind bars and windows until they finally disappeared. Some believe they were disposed of before the coronation.

The Princes in the Tower



IN HIS famous account of the events some 30 years later, Sir Thomas More claims that Richard decided to kill his nephews after his coronation. He entrusted one John Green to take a letter to the constable of the Tower, Sir Robert Brackenbury, indicating that he should put the boys to death.

Brackenbury refused, and Green returned to his king at Warwick. In desperation, Richard enlisted Sir James Tyrell in his cause, sending him to Brackenbury with a command to deliver to Tyrell the keys to the Tower for a night

Sir James appointed a notorious murderer and his own horsekeeper, 'a big broad strong square knave', to carry out the deed. All attendants were taken off the princes and around midnight while in their beds they were smothered with feather beds and pillows.

They laid the bodies of the innocents on their beds and called in Sir James to see them. He had them buried at the foot of the stairs. This story has since been discredited, and even More admitted to some doubts about his sources because of so many conflicting rumours.



THE character of the young Prince Edward, king for a few short months, stands out nobly against the treachery that surrounded him. The contemporary Italian writer, Mancini, praised him highly for his scholarly attainments, his dignity and charm, but reports that the boy had grave premonitions of his death.

The tide began to turn against Richard when it was widely held that he had had his nephews murdered. In 1485, Henry Tudor, a rival claimant to the throne, left France and landed at Milford Haven. Most of Richard's supporters deserted him, and he was defeated and killed in the Battle of Bosworth Field.

In 1933, the skeletons of the two children found in

1674 were examined. Medical evidence shows that one skeleton was of a child between 12 and 13, the other of someone younger around 10, which correspond with the ages of the princes in 1483. However, one dental authority placed the elder as under ten.

Doubts still linger about two other suspects. Both Richard's close associates, the Duke of Buckingham, who led a rebellion and was later executed, and his successor, Henry VII, could have had the princes killed to discredit Richard. But the fact remains that Richard himself never effectively counteracted the rumours of his villainy.

(Courtesy: BIS)

(Next month: Christopher Marlowe)

Another cathedral claims to have the oldest self-striking clock in the world. There are two gateways on either side on the clock face; when the clock strikes the

Yet another clock that deserves mention is the one an American, David Rittenhouse, invented. It has six dials. The main one has four hands which show seconds, minutes, hours, and days. Another shows the movements of the planets round the sun. A third shows the moon revolving round the earth; yet another shows the movement of Saturn. The fifth dial shows whether the sun time is fast or slow. The sixth musically sounds the quarter hours. In addition to the above, the clock has yet another feature. Like a juke-box, there are ten tunes; but unlike it, you need not insert a coin—you have only to press a knob and your selection will roll out!

(NOTE: You can read about someone in India, who had a collection of nearly 300 clocks and watches, in these columns soon.—Editor)



PLATYPUS exchanged for PANGOLIN

India and Australia recently exchanged natural history exhibits to the benefit of museums in both countries. A stuffed Platypus came from the Victorian Museum in Melbourne, while the National Museum of Natural History, New Delhi, sent a stuffed specimen of the Indian Spiny Anteater (Pangolin) to the Australian museum. The photograph (at left) taken at the exchange ceremony shows Dr. A. Ramachandran, Secretary to Government of India, Department of Science and Technology, and the Australian High Commissioner to India, Mr. Peter Curtis, flanked by the two exhibits.

(Courtesy : Australian Information Department)

MONSTERS PROVIDE AMUSEMENT

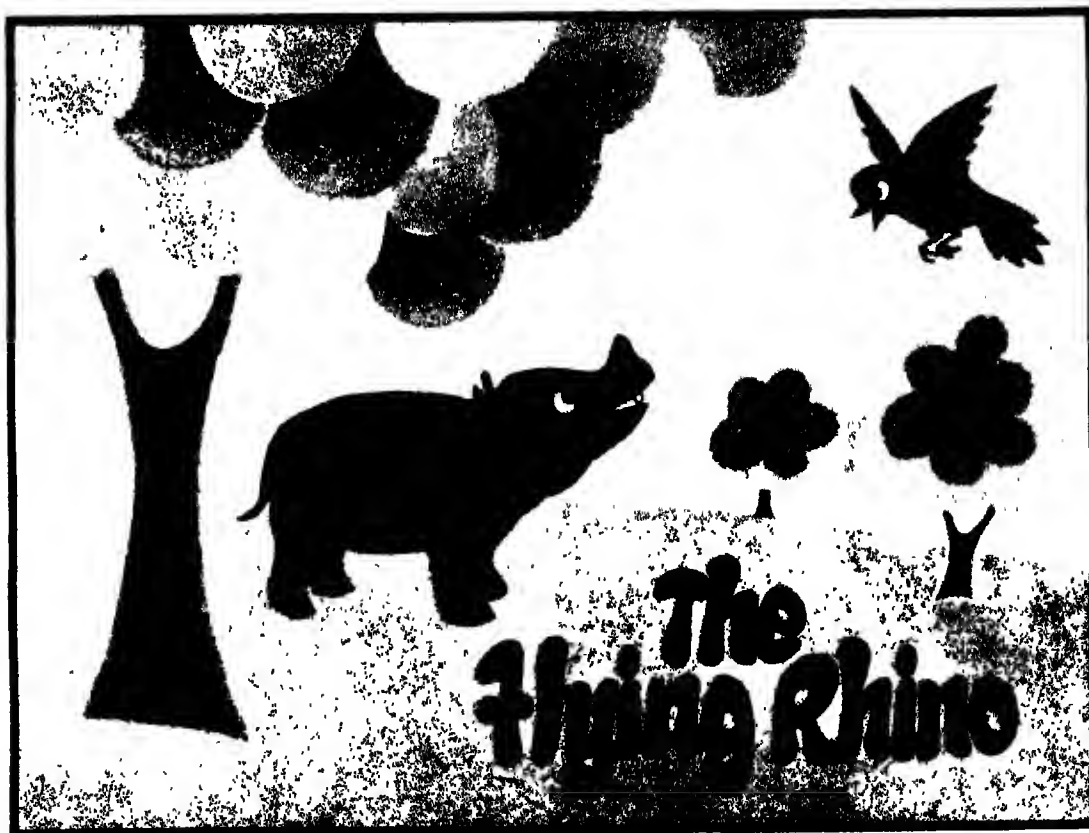
Does it bite? wonders the tiny tot (at right). Not this 'monster' in the Windsor Safari Park, near London. It is made of moulded glass fibre and is among the many life-like prehistoric exhibits produced by a British firm for amusement parks and children's play areas. Each original is sculpted in clay and a mould made from it. Several tons of clay on a metal frame is used to make the original of the tyrannosaurus, one of the largest monsters the firm makes, measuring 33 ft (10 metres) long and 19 ft (5.8 metres) high. The fibre glass figures are hollow and self-supporting. They are highly detailed and accurate, as a result of close cooperation with Britain's Natural History Museum. A range of 13 dinosaurs of various kinds are produced, as well as three models of their human counterpart — the cavemen — besides humorous animal and human figures.

(Courtesy: BIS)



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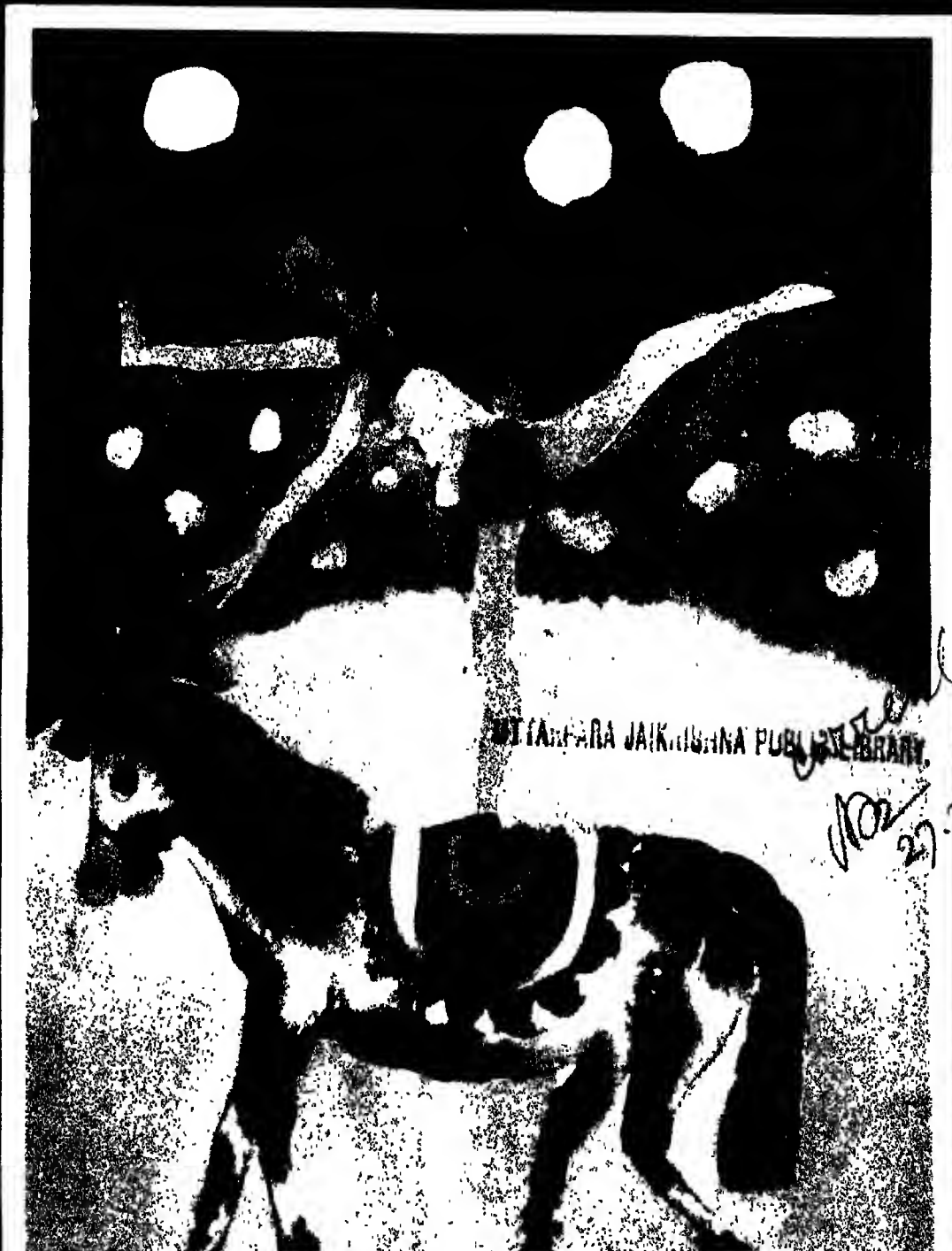
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FOOLS

WANTED



THERE was once a king. He had many whims. One day, he asked his minister to go and bring four fools from among his subjects. The minister had to obey the king's orders. So, he went in search of fools.

First, he came across a man with a very big load on his head riding a horse. He approached the man and asked him why he was carrying the load himself. The man replied, "I don't want to put this heavy load on my horse. I know it is too much for him to carry."

The minister thought that he had found

the first fool and asked him to go with him to the king.

On the way, he saw a man distributing sweets to the people in the streets. The minister asked him why he was doing that, and the man said, "My wife left me and married another man. She has now been blessed with a son. I feel so happy that I am celebrating by distributing sweets to the people."

The minister thought that he had found a second fool and asked him also to follow him to the king.

As soon as they reached the palace, the

minister went before the king and presented the two fools and told him why they were fools.

The king smiled and said, "But I had asked you to go find out four fools, and you have brought only two. Where are the other two?"

"Your Majesty," replied the minister, "I am the third fool, for undertaking to find fools."

"And where is the fourth one?" asked the

king, rather impatiently.

"Your Majesty will forgive me," said the minister haltingly. "You're the fourth fool."

"Me?" shouted the King. "Why do you call me a fool?"

"Your Majesty," the minister said, "you're in search of fools and not wise men."

The king thought that his minister might be right.

Chanku

THE BLUE MAXI

ALKA had a large wardrobe. All her attractive dresses hung from a rod at the top of the shelf. Diwali was fast approaching and there was a lot of excitement among Alka's dresses. They wondered what new dress would join them. Would it be a frock, a midi, or a maxi? They were soon to know when, a few days later, the Yellow Cotton Frock came back from an outing, all excited. It said, "Alka has chosen her Diwali dress! It's a blue silk maxi!"

There was a ripple of excitement, and conversation buzzed from all sides of the wardrobe.

The Brown Bell-bottom Top, last year's Diwali dress, asked eagerly, "Tell us, is it lovely? Where did Alka buy it?"

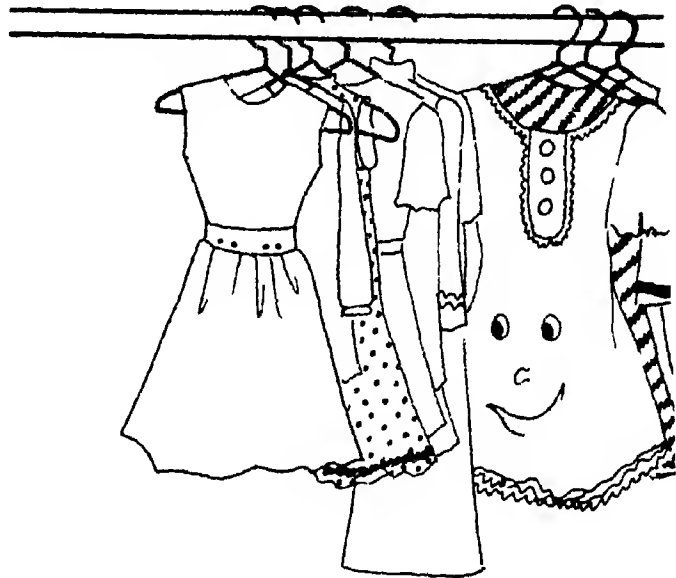
The Yellow Frock then gave them the details. Alka and her mother had gone shopping. After looking at a number of lovely and expensive clothes, Alka had chosen the blue silk. Then they had gone to the tailors to have it stitched into a maxi. "Oh it's gorgeous! So beautiful, bright and shining! You will all love it!" the Yellow Cotton said delightedly.

Anticipation ran high among the dresses. They could talk of nothing else. You see,

they all loved Alka very much. She washed and cleaned them. One thing they all didn't like was getting ironed. But they knew that the hot iron removed their wrinkles and made them look smart. That meant Alka would also look pretty when she wore them. Since they loved their young mistress very much, they bore the iron quietly.

Everytime the wardrobe was opened, the dresses looked out to see if the Blue Maxi had arrived. But it took a week more. One afternoon, Alka brought it and hung it up with the other dresses. The wardrobe doors closed.

The School Uniform, which was hanging next to the new arrival, said, "Hello, how do you do? You're so pretty!"





Blue Maxi made no reply. It only looked disdainfully at them all.

Brown Bell-bottom Top asked, "Aren't you feeling comfortable?"

"I think it is feeling shy," said Yellow Frock.

Then Blue Maxi spoke. "I hate this place. So dark and dismal! I don't like any one of you. I'm used to much better company."

The dresses were stunned at this rudeness. They felt angry, too. But being polite, they did not scold Blue Maxi.

Days passed and Blue Maxi continued to complain. "Oh, you should have seen the place where I was stitched. It's an exclusive draper's shop. Only the best of material comes there. I was so carefully cut and stitched. When finished, I was hung up inside a glass case with bright lights.

People admired me. The other dresses, too, were so grand. We were a distinguished company!"

Alka's dresses were disgusted with Blue Maxi. They hated snobs.

One day, Green Midi came back from a visit to Alka's aunt. It said excitedly, "Guess whom we met outside the Post Office? Alka's Headmistress. School Uniform has spoken so much about her that I've always wanted to meet her."

"Tell us how she looks, Green Midi," the others pleaded.

Listening to them, Blue Maxi pulled up its beautiful collar in disdain. "Oh, a Headmistress. I've met such great people, even film stars. You know, Hema Malini? She came to the shop where I lived and she, too, bought a piece of me."

The other dresses did not like Blue Maxi at all. Its superior airs irritated them. Besides Blue Maxi was always making mean remarks about them.

At last Diwali came around. The dresses heard Alka's delighted shouts as she burst crackers. Blue Maxi had been especially tiresome that day. It kept boasting, "I will meet so many new people. I'll make friends with all the smart dresses. They will be as beautiful as I am. It will be nice meeting them after being cooped up with you all."

The dresses were dismayed. Each Diwali, they looked forward to hearing about all the sweets and the crackers that were burst. But this year, Blue Maxi would only speak of the friends it had made.

In the evening, Blue Maxi was taken out. Alka was going to her grandmother's place for Diwali dinner. The dresses gave a sigh of relief. At last, Blue Maxi was gone. Now they could relax and chat freely.

School Uniform said sadly, "I feel so insignificant."

Green Pant Suit said hotly, "Why should you? I would like to see the Headmistress's face if Alka were to appear in school wearing Blue Maxi."

At this all of them laughed delightedly, most of all School Uniform, for it knew the Headmistress very well indeed.

"You have your place, School Uniform. Don't feel so sad. You, too, are important," Yellow Frock said.



All the dresses relaxed, for they knew Blue Maxi would return late at night. They were, therefore, really surprised when ten minutes later, Blue Maxi was returned to the wardrobe and the Red Party Dress was taken away.

School Uniform gasped "Ooh, ooh... look at Blue Maxi."

The other dresses craned their hangers to look. What a shock they got! There was a big gaping hole on Blue Maxi's bodice!

Blue Maxi was in tears. "That servant girl, she ironed me too hot. See what's happened. I'm all spoilt now," it sobbed.

The dresses were very kind-hearted. They felt sorry for Blue Maxi. It must have got a painful shock. They consoled Blue Maxi. Soon it stopped crying.

Days passed. Other dresses were taken

out and worn by Alka. Red Party Dress spoke of the lovely Birthday cakes it had seen; School Uniform told them of the fun Alka and her friends had in school; Brown Bell-bottom Top and Green Midi described the illuminated shops they had seen.

Only Blue Maxi was quiet. It was never taken out and worn. As other dresses were often taken out, it got pushed to one end of the wardrobe. Now it never spoke disdainfully. The other dresses felt sorry for it. So, they decided on a plan of action. Every time a dress was taken out, they pushed Blue Maxi towards the centre of the wardrobe.

At last, one day Alka saw it. She exclaimed, "Mother, look at the Blue Maxi. It's so pretty. What can we do with it?"

Alka's mother examined the dress carefully. She said, "We will have to take it to the tailors and have it altered."

So Blue Maxi was once again taken away. A week later it returned, smiling and happy! Gone was the spoilt bodice. Now Blue Maxi had been altered into a maxi skirt. Along with it came a yellow silk blouse. Oh, what a welcome they got from Alka's dresses.

Happily, Blue Maxi told them of how it had been altered and how Alka's mother had got Yellow Blouse to go with it. They made a gay pair indeed! Yellow Blouse keeps Alka's dresses laughing at its jokes.

Blue Maxi loves them all, but best of all it loves Yellow Blouse!

Raj Kinger





THE old woman kept shaking her head and murmured, "I can't believe it. I must be dreaming. It can't be true."

And her old tired eyes filled with tears.

But the policeman, at the small police station in the big city of Chicago, kept on nodding and smiled. "It's true, madam! It *is* true."



Old Mrs. Franklin was dozing on a bench in a park in Chicago, away from the highways, the honking cars, the screeching wheels, the crowds of busy passers-by.

The last rays of the autumn sun felt warm on her hands and on her legs. Beside her lay an old tattered shopping bag, filled with the most essential groceries for the

next week: potatoes, a bottle of milk, some eggs, and bread. That was all she had bought; for that was all she could afford. It was a long time since she had eaten meat or sausages, fish or cheese, or those delicious oranges from California. The small pension her husband had left her provided hardly enough money except for the bare minimum.

Mrs. Franklin closed her eyes. The park lay quiet and peaceful. A couple of children played on the lawns, squealing and laughing at a distance. Her chin dropped to her chest and soon she was asleep. Suddenly, she sat up with a start. Had she fallen asleep?

She looked around. The park was almost empty. The children had left. The setting sun had set the tall multi-storeyed buildings beyond aglow. She shivered. It was time to go home.

Mrs. Franklin left the bench and walked back to the gate. The evening breeze had sent the red-gold autumn leaves dancing to the ground.

At the street crossing, she waited patiently for the red light to change to green. She moved amidst the hurrying throng of pedestrians to the other side of the street and then began her slow walk home. She stopped in front of the drug store at the corner of Truman Avenue and looked into the beautifully decorated show-window filled with chocolates and sweets. Her mouth watered. Maybe today she could buy herself some chocolate. Today had been such a lovely day—maybe the last sunny day before the onset of winter. Today she should buy something special.

Mrs. Franklin searched her coat pocket for her purse. The purse that contained all her money. Not much, but whatever little it was, that was all she had till the end of the month. She dug into her left pocket and then into her right. The purse wasn't there. She couldn't find it. Had she forgotten it at home? She couldn't have. She never left home without her purse. It had to be with her. But it just wasn't.

She started to search frantically through

all her pockets, but her purse was not to be found. Then she remembered! Ah, yes, it was in her shopping bag. Her shopping bag! But where was her shopping bag? Where was it? She couldn't remember. Her mind raced, whirled back, flashed back on her routine of the day. And suddenly she knew where she had left it—on the bench in the park. She must reach the park before they closed it—get back to the bench with her bag—her bag that contained all she had.

Old Mrs. Franklin turned and pushed her way through the stream of people. Her face was flushed with nervousness, her lips white and trembling. Soon she reached the park and hastened through the gate, stumbling over the pebbled path.

Her heart was pounding in her chest. There! that must be the bench, right under the chestnut tree. Yes, she remembered the spot quite well. That was the bench she was resting on just an hour ago.

But when she reached it, she found it empty. Just two big leaves rustled softly on its seat. Her bag was gone.

Mary Rose Franklin, she scolded herself, it is all your fault. Why must you be so forgetful? You're just a sleepy old head.

She knew that weeping wouldn't help, that feeling depressed was as silly as shedding tears. Maybe she should go to the police station and report the loss. She knew it wouldn't help much, but she would go all the same.

Maybe someone had found the bag and handed it in at the police station. Maybe. Mrs. Franklin hastened back. Her feet started to pain, her head reeled. Oh, it was too much for an old woman of her age.

When she reached the nearest police station, her forehead was damp with perspiration. Breathing hard, she pushed the door open.

The policeman looked at her questioningly. "Yes, madam, can I help you?"

"I really hope you could," said Mrs. Franklin and dropped into a chair, panting. She unbuttoned the collar of her coat and sighed deeply. "Officer," she said plead-

ingly, "I've lost my bag."

The policeman looked into her deeply-lined face, into the tired grey eyes. He took in her faded old coat and the little red scarf wound around her neck. He suddenly knew how much that bag must mean to her. "Madam," he smiled reassuringly, "someone has found a bag and brought it here. It could be yours. Will you describe your bag to me and all its contents?"

"My bag!" cried Mrs. Franklin and jumped from her seat. "Has it been found, Officer? Tell me, is it my bag?"

"I do not know, madam. You must tell me what *your* bag looks like."

Mrs. Franklin fell back into her seat. Her voice trembled as she described her bag, enumerating its contents. She did not forget anything, not even the picture of her husband in the inner pocket of her purse.

The policeman smiled. "It is your bag, madam. But besides all the things you have named, it holds much more."

"More?" Mrs. Franklin shook her head. "No, Officer, that is all I bought."

The policeman pulled a bag onto the table. He placed it in front of her and opened it. "Here, see for yourself."

Mrs. Franklin opened the bag with trembling hands. There was her purse, the potatoes, the bottle of milk, bread, and the eggs. But in addition to these things, she found a big chocolate, with almonds and raisins, tins of meat and sausages, tuna fish and liver paste, mayonnaise salad, and a dozen sweet Californian oranges.

And on top of all this lay a note which read:

"Accept these as a small compensation for the shock you must have had losing your bag."

Mrs. Franklin shook her head over and over again. And with tears rolling down her wrinkled cheeks, she whispered:

"I cannot believe it. I must be dreaming. Is it true?"

Sigrun Srivastava

“Music is dead”

IT was the eleventh year of the ascension of Aurangzeb ‘Alamgir’, the sixth in the line of the mighty emperors of the celebrated dynasty of the Mughals—the year 1669, the month February. Aurangzeb, a great puritan, a staunch and orthodox Sunni, performed his early morning ‘namaz’ as usual, with great piety and reverence. He felt particularly gratified that day. He had, no doubt, ample cause for it. Merciful Providence would smile benignly on him for, he had, just the previous day issued a new regulation, in strict accordance with the Holy Law. He had banned music from his court.

“The Shahenshah has no time for such trivial amusements like music. It is against the Law. The court singers and musicians are dismissed. Banish them from the royal court!” the Emperor observed.

The ministers, the nobles, the courtiers, and the Amirs stood speechless at this fresh curb on their freedom. The Muhtasibs or Public Censors hustled around evicting the last of the singers, ‘the infidels’, from the court. All musical instruments, including the ‘naqurrah’, Akbar’s favourite instrument, were thrown out. Strict orders were passed that not a single note of music was to be heard in the entire capital.

Now feeling immensely pleased with himself, Aurangzeb, Conqueror of the World, sat on the Peacock Throne in the ‘Ams Khas’, the Hall of Public Audience. The distinguished officers of the state were presented to him and were given Khilats and rewards. He then got ready to go through the petitions placed before him. He personally read each one of them and endorsed it with his own hand. He enjoyed his reputation of being a just and fair-minded monarch.

Presently, a group of musicians were presented to him. They made their obeisance to the mighty Emperor of Hindostan.

The leader of the group said, “Padsha-i-Ghazi, O Emperor, Holy Warrior, we beg you to show mercy. You have thrown us

out of employment. Our only means of livelihood is at stake. Pray, reconsider your decision.”

“What?” the Emperor roared. “When I issue an order, I want it understood that it stays an order. You wretches, how dare you ask me to set aside any rule! You are traitors to the Holy Law.”

The leader of the group burst out in a pitiable voice, “O, Alamgir, this is a taint on the fair names of your ancestors! Is this the land that saw such bright stars as Mian Tansen and Jagannath? Is this the land that produced such illustrious patrons of music as Akbar and Shah Jahan?”

He was cut short by the Emperor’s stern reproof. “Beware! Do you realise who you are talking to? Get out of my sight and never again show me your face!”

This was, however, not to be Aurangzeb’s last meeting with the ‘treacherous tribe’ of musicians!

That evening, the Emperor was on his way to offer public prayers at the great mosque. Ensconced in a splendid horse-drawn carriage, he was accompanied by the Chief Viziers, the ministers, the nobles and his personal entourage. All of a sudden, the equipage came to a grinding halt. Loud wailing and mourning could be heard.

A large multitude of people thronged the sides of the street. Shopkeepers from the Urdu Bazaar, mechanics, workmen—all left their work en masse to watch the commotion. It was a funeral procession. About a thousand musicians had gathered together. They had assembled twenty biers and their loud grief-stricken wails were like that of Hindus when they carry their dead to the cremation ground.

The Emperor alighted from the carriage. Solemnly, he bowed his head as a sign of respect to the dead. He was blissfully unaware that the procession consisted of the same musicians whom he had banished from the court.

After a while, the Emperor, his habitual suspicious nature aroused, asked a man in the procession, "Whose death are you mourning?"

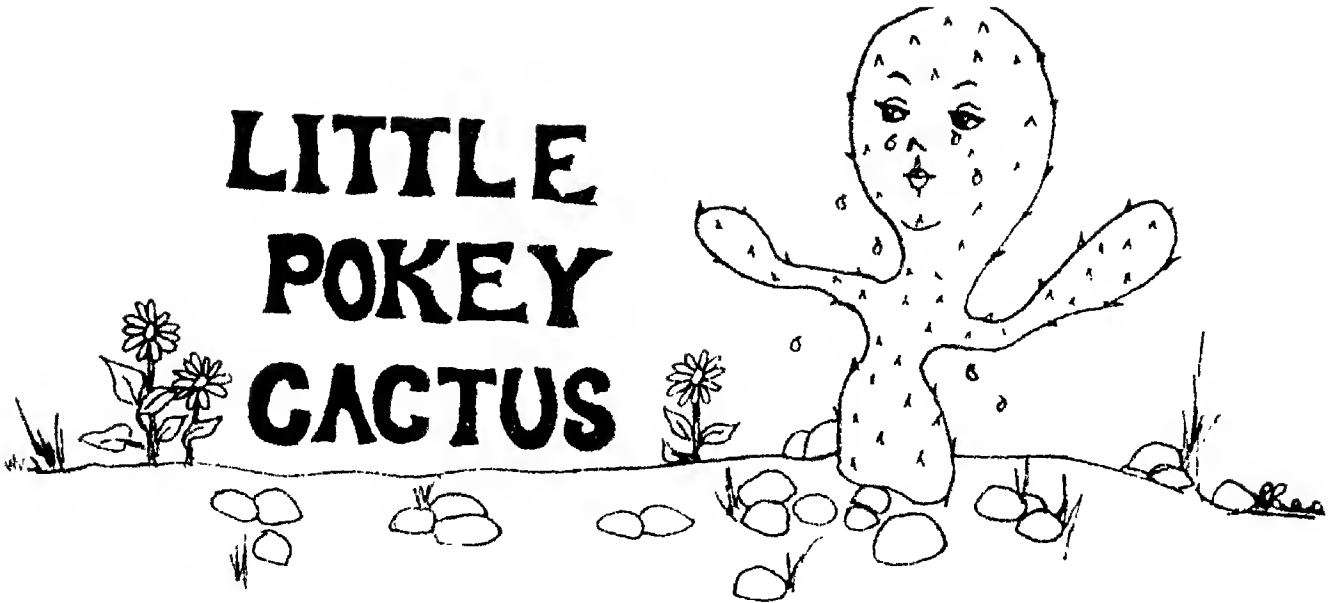
The bewailing musician lamented pitifully, "O mighty Shahenshah of Hind, Music is dead in this land. We go to bury her."

Incensed at this remark, Aurangzeb flew into a rage. He ordered for his carriage. His customary wit, however, got the better of his anger and came to his rescue. He observed with caustic humour, as his carriage moved away, "Bury her deep, so that she may not raise her head again."

Lakshmi Mohan



LITTLE POKEY CACTUS



IT was dawn. Little Pokey Cactus, as they all called her, woke up and stretched her plump green limbs out to catch the morning dew that came sailing down from the sky. In no time, the others in the garden-plot that she shared with them all also stirred and awoke. The first few rays of the sun suddenly spilled over into the cool fresh morning and all the plants rose to greet them, their flowers and leaves stirring to action with a great swishing sigh of joy.

Their gentle little mistress, who tended them all, came out to sprinkle them with water before she got dressed and ran off to school. She pulled out a few of the weeds—their sworn enemies!—as they had no business being there, and caressed her beloved little garden-friends. “Hello, dear Rosy,” she said to her dignified-looking rose-plant. “And how are we this morning, Mr. Canna and family?” Then, it was the turn of the snap-dragons and the hollyhocks. When she had greeted them all—the phlox and the sweet-peas as well—she came to the rocky corner where Little Pokey Cactus grew.

“So ... old Pokey ...” she greeted her, “how are you, my old friend, Pokey?” She did not reach out to caress her as she had caressed the other plants, as Pokey had sharp, prickly thorns in every square decimetre of her taut green skin. Pokey tried to stretch out a limb to touch her beloved little mistress in gratitude but, no, she couldn’t stretch at all; her body was too stiff.

“Bye bye!” cried the little gardener and ran back to the house, swinging her little watering-can.

Poor Little Pokey was close to tears. How she wished she could be like the other plants and move about freely in the air and turn her leaves and flowers in any way she wanted to. But she did not even have proper leaves and flowers—only fleshy green-coloured prickly limbs that grew out all over her. She knew that she really was a good-looking cactus—she had heard visitors to their gardenplot enthuse over her and exclaim what a lovely cactus she was!

No, that was not the problem. The real problem was that she wanted to be somebody else—not a cactus. She was tired of being a cactus—nobody would come close to her because she pricked them too much. Little Pokey wanted to cry, but she could not—no tears came. How perfectly lovely it is to be a sweet little phlox or a tall waving hollyhock! Or even if she had to have thorns, why couldn’t she have been a rose-plant, instead? Poor Little Pokey felt very dejected, indeed.

The other plants were all very sympathetic—they could guess how she felt, so they tried not to show off their fine colourful flowers before her. “What can we do to help her?” they wondered. But there didn’t seem to be anything they could do ...

Then, one day, they had new neighbours move in nextdoor. They came with all their luggage and a huge fierce dog that they called Tiger. The plants heard him

bark wildly and tear around in the garden nextdoor and shuddered. What a demon of a dog he must be ... they were glad they were not growing in the garden nextdoor!

Then, quite by accident, somebody happened to leave their gate open. Before the plants could realise what was happening, the enormous fierce Tiger had crashed into their garden, snarling and growling. "Oh! Oh!" they cried in sheer terror "Oh! Oh!" He ran berserk here and there, snatching off a flower here and a bunch of leaves there. He crunched up one of the phlox plants, still growling. "Oh! Help! Save us!" cried the poor little plants in utter distress. But nobody was there to hear them. Everybody had gone out somewhere. What could they do?

Then Tiger looked around and saw



Little Pokey. His ears pricked up. Ah! here was a fat juicy looking plant—it must be delicious. He charged at Pokey and sank his teeth into her. The next moment, he let out such a howl of pain and anguish and let her go. Her prickles were all stuck to his nose and the inside of his mouth, still hurting him.

The plants sat still and watched the scene in amazement. That fierce growling dog was grovelling about on the lawn, trying to remove the nasty sharp prickles from his mouth with his paw. But he couldn't—they all stuck fast. He lumbered to his feet and ran and ran without a backward glance till he was safe in his home, next-door.

The plants all slowly turned towards their saviour. She felt bruised in a few places like the rest of them, where the nasty dog had bit her. They all stared at her, wondering how to put their gratitude in words.

Finally, Mr. Canna spoke up: "You've saved us!" he said in a voice full of emotion. "You've saved our lives. You're a heroine."

All the plants picked it up. "Yes—you are a real heroine! Thanks to you that nasty dog will never come into our garden again."

Little Pokey felt very touched. "It is nothing!" she said. Then she added a little note of thanksgiving silently. 'Dear God!' she thought, "I'm glad you made me a cactus."

When their little mistress came back home, she took one look at them all and guessed what had happened. "Oh—you poor things!" she wept, "that nasty dog!" and bandaged them up. Some of the plants got splints for their fractured limbs and felt like war heroes. Little Pokey sat in the corner and watched them all. Her own wounds were already beginning to heal.

Her mistress came up to her. "Old Pokey!" she said. "I can guess, you must have saved their lives. Thanks, old pal." And this time, she actually reached out a kind hand to give her a long good caress.

Little Pokey Cactus beamed and beamed. Oh, it felt good to be alive!

Padmini Rao

MIRZA GHALIB

AFTER the glorious period of rule when emperors like Babar, Akbar, Shahjehan, and Aurangzeb had reigned, the Mughal empire in India started declining. The pomp and splendour, the awe and wonder of the court, all waned steadily. And by the beginning of the 17th century, affairs of the state showed a positive degeneration. Hence the number of immigrants to India and its Mughal court became negligible.

However, one Turkman, Ququan Beg Khan, found his way to Delhi from Samarkand, in search of a living. It is said that he came from a well-connected family and this, coupled with his good breeding, served him well in the court of Delhi.

Two of Ququan Beg Khan's many children were Nasrullah Beg Khan and Abdullah Beg Khan. Both were intelligent and held enviable jobs under the Nawabs of the day. Abdullah Beg Khan married into a rich, military family. He had two sons and a daughter; the elder of the sons was Mirza Ghalib, later to become a famous poet.

Ghalib was born in Agra on 27 December 1797. As Abdullah Beg Khan's profession kept him on the move always, Ghalib lived with his mother in her parents' house in Agra. They were a very affluent family and Ghalib knew no hardship during his childhood. However, in 1802, when Ghalib was hardly five years of age, Abdullah Beg Khan was killed in a feud. Thereafter, the family came under the guardianship of his brother, Nasrullah Beg Khan.

Nasrullah was in the good books of the British. As a result of good service, Lord Lake, the British Commander-in-chief, bestowed two districts on him for life. However, misfortune came fast on the heels of this affluence. For, one day in 1806, Nasrullah fell from an elephant and died of the injuries a few days later. Ghalib

became guardianless a second time, before he was even nine years of age.

The family now came under the protection of a kinsman called Nawab Ahmad Baksh Khan. Through his endeavours, the family of Nasrullah Beg Khan was granted a pension of Rs. 10,000 per annum. Out of this, Ghalib's share was a paltry Rs. 750 per annum. But as Ghalib's mother and her family were well-off, he could enjoy a comfortable life.



During those days, education for Muslim children consisted of Quranic and religious teachings. Common schools in the mosques were called a 'maktaba' and the religious teacher a 'maulvi'. Then there were private schools run by the rich people for their children and also schools run by scholars.

Ghalib went to a school run by a scholar of the day, called Mohammad Mu'azzam. He studied under him till he was 12 years old. As Persian was the court language and the medium of instruction, Ghalib, too, learnt Persian. He read classical Persian poetry and prose avidly. He also took some elementary lessons in Arabic.

While Ghalib was still a student, a Persian scholar called Abdus Samad arrived in Agra. He was a scholar of Zoroastrianism and Islam. He lived with Ghalib's family for two years and his influence on the young pupil was longlasting. In 1812, both of them came to Delhi—Abdus Samad to continue his travels, and Ghalib to settle down. In 1810, when Ghalib was only 13, he had married the daughter of a rich relative. As his wife's family lived in Delhi, Ghalib had no problems in shifting to Delhi. As if that wasn't enough, his rich father-in-law was also a well-known poet and nobleman. This paved the way for Ghalib to enter the right circles at the right time. He mixed with the poets, priests, saints, and wise men of the day.

Ghalib had begun writing poetry even before he left the Agra school. At first he wrote in Persian, but as Urdu was developing into a rich and popular language, he soon switched over to it and stuck to it all through. Nevertheless, he was greatly influenced by Persian poets. His early attempts at poetry-writing got a very critical response. It is to his credit that this initial setback did not deter him and he persevered. He wrote: "I'm replete with grouses like an organ of tunes; You have only to touch and see the result for yourself."

Gradually, amongst the brickbats appeared some bouquets. One such admirer was Nawab Husain-ud-Dawlah, a great nobleman and poet. He was a pupil of the great Meer, the reigning poet of the day. Once on a visit to Lucknow, the Nawab showed some ghazals of Ghalib to Meer. One glance at them revealed to Meer the great potential of the young writer. He told the Nawab that the boy should be-

come a great poet if given a competent guide. Later, Ghalib was to write: "You are not the only master of Urdu, O Ghalib! There lived one Meer also, they say in the past."

The tradition of a guide (ustad) and pupil (shagird) came from Iran. An acknowledged poet would guide and teach young poets in form and style. Ghalib, however, never had any formal guidance in this field. His was the way of trial and error, and as his poetic muse flowered, he claimed that it was a divine gift to him. He wrote: "They ask 'Who is Ghalib?' Could someone advise me what reply to give?"

Ghalib first started writing under the pen-name, Asad. But when he learnt later that there was another poet with the same name, he switched over to Ghalib to avoid confusion.

In 1841, the *Diwan*, in Urdu, was published. As Ghalib's biographer, Malik Ram, puts it, its publication truly proved to be a turning point in the history of Urdu literature. Its far-reaching influence is still a wonder. But the overall influence of Mirza Ghalib to Urdu poetry is even more of a wonder. He introduced a vein of realism to the highly unrealistic Urdu poetry and it is on the trail he blazed that worthy successors have followed. As Ghalib himself so aptly put it: "Man's mind is the playground of millions of thoughts; To me solitude is a veritable crowd of noisy friends."

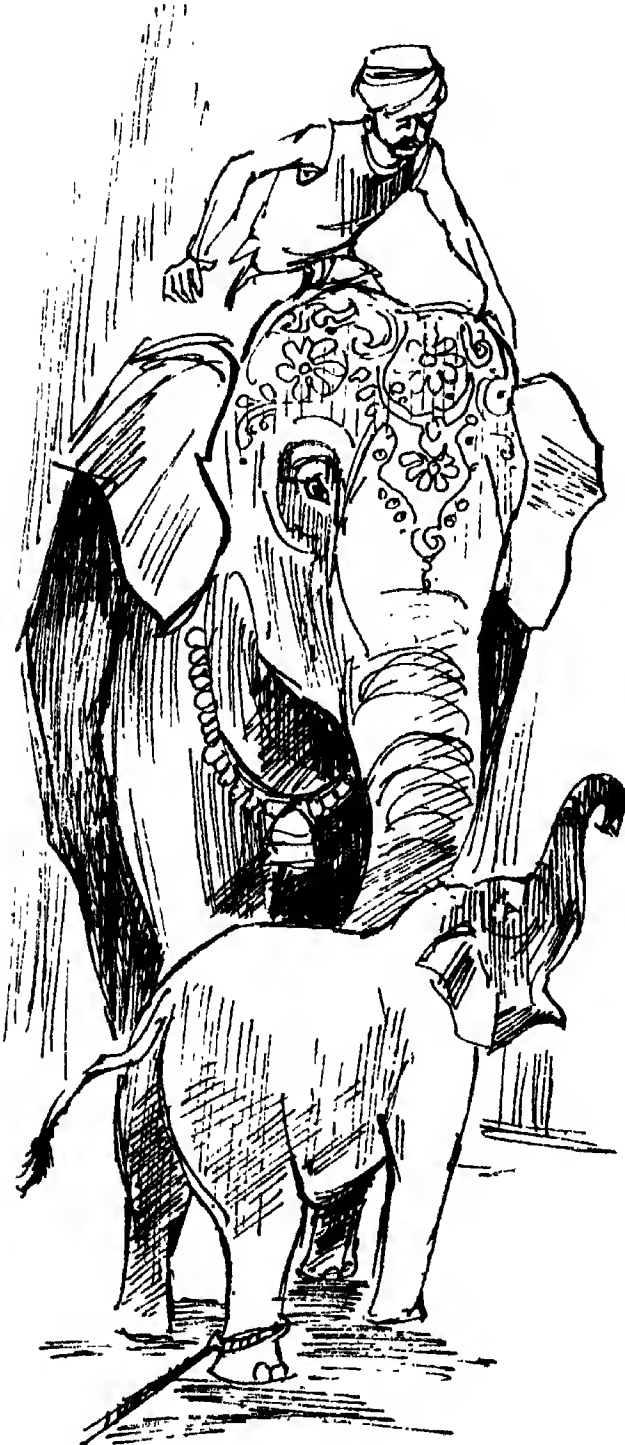
On 15 February 1869, soon after midday, Ghalib succumbed to a stroke of cerebral haemorrhage.

"All my life I have looked forward to death. I don't know what lies in store for me when death does actually come," he had written.

And by now, Ghalib, surely, you must have come to know!

Sabina Valson

IN SEARCH OF MY MOTHER



HOW did those tiny two-legged beings catch my mother?" I asked the wise old elephant, who had been my constant escort ever since I began missing my affectionate mother.

"You'll come to know more about it when you grow big," he said, moving closer to me. I got the feeling that I need not be afraid of anything when I was in his company.

"Well, your mother's story," he continued, "was a lesson to all of us, and it has almost become a legend."

As we took a few more paces, I insisted on hearing the story. He began: "One day, we had all gone down the river to have a bath. Your mother was a late starter, but she loved her bath. So, by the time she reached the river, the rest of us were already coming out one after the other.

"Suddenly, we heard a stir in the jungle. Our leader called out to us to finish our bath quick and leave the place immediately. We sensed possible danger, and scrambled out of the river. But your mother kept on splashing water, unmindful of the warning. I was her best friend, so I waited for her. When she saw that I was still keeping her company, she only delayed coming out of the river. Meanwhile, our herd had moved farther away, as the noises from the jungle came louder and nearer. I called out to her once again and without turning back, I began running fast. I stopped only once—that was when I heard your mother's groans. And I knew what would have happened to her. She must have been caught in the trap laid by the men."

He paused for a while and said, "I believe these two-legged beings make use of us for carrying logs of wood. Sometimes they even kill us and take away our shapely tusks. For several days we used to hear your mother's bells from across the river. No more of them now. Is she alive? Nobody knows!"

The night after I heard my mother's story, I did not get a wink of sleep. What would be the kind of life beyond the river? I wondered. Where was my mother? Some moments I thought I even heard her bells. I wanted to follow the sound. Maybe if I followed the bells, I could see my mother?

I managed to slip away from my herd

quietly. The night was quite dark, but I somehow found my way to the river. I crossed the river, trying not to make much noise. Once ashore, I started walking in a fury. Were my legs giving way? I felt as if my legs had got stuck. I tried to pull them out. I couldn't and only stumbled. I thought the sky had fallen on me. I tried to get up. The more I tried, I only got entangled more and more. I lay still, tired, hazy and puzzled. Soon, it was dawn and in the first light of the day, I saw that I was enveloped in a net! 'But this is not a fishing net?' I smiled to myself. 'Let me see how the two-legged creature is going to lift me out—a heavy thing like me!'

Sure, I felt the net pull. Not that it was any strong pull. But I had gone so weak that I was unable to strain against it. I was slowly being dragged. I, the symbol of strength, weight and power, was being lifted like a log of wood! I felt helpless. I must have lost my senses.

I awoke to realities only when I heard the sound of bells. I pulled myself up. I saw several elephants around me—their faces, heads and trunks painted—swaying to the sound of bells around their necks. My mother was not among them! Where was she?

I was still pondering when a two-legged being came up to me and kept something in front of me. My food. How did he know that I was hungry? I gulped down whatever was there.

What I saw around me was really stupefying. The two-legged creature seemed all-powerful as he gave directions to the other elephants. One after the other, they all moved out, and I was left all alone.

I must have been dead tired, and I went into a deep slumber. When I opened my eyes, it was already morning. The two-legged being also came back. I was to start on my training and daily routine from then on. I learnt to carry logs of wood, also to kneel down whenever I was asked to, so that someone could climb on to me. I got my face painted and carried a heavy chain on my neck. Luckily, I had freedom to use my legs as I wished. Whenever I swayed my head, the bell on my neck made a tinkling noise. Would the wise

elephant hear the tinkle? Would my friends have taken me for dead?

One day, I was bathed, painted, and fed earlier than usual. The two-legged creature mounted me and we went for a long walk. This morning walk later became a routine, and sometimes we would even go up to the river which I had once crossed in search of my mother and had landed in this mysterious land where elephants were put to work.

It's not that I did not remember my mother anymore, but longed for the company of my friends. I wanted to go back to where they were. So, whenever I went near the river, I began looking out for the route I had taken earlier.

I got my chance very soon. My mount had got down for a while. I didn't lose any time. I headed for the water in one dash and made it! My frantic run must have caused my bell to sound loud, for by the time I reached the familiar shore, I saw some of my friends looking out cautiously from behind the trees.

Strangely, when I approached them, I found them running away from me! With difficulty, I could guess that they might have got frightened because of my painted face. I wiped it clean with the help of leaves by the time I made it to where our herd was.

It was nice to see all of them—including the wise elephant. He came and patted me. I told them about my adventure, about the mystery land, about the many elephants there with bells around their necks. Every time I moved my head and my bells sounded, I saw a look of fear in my friends. I felt that my earlier escape from their company had not so much affected them as my safe return to their midst!

Didn't I anymore belong to them? Did they panic because my bells might attract the two-legged creature to them? No, I shouldn't be responsible for a similar tragedy to them.

I ran back to the river, crossed it a third time and into the mystery land once again. I thought I really heard my mother's bells this time.....

Toshi Goswami

Grandma's Pickles

.....'Ratta—tat—tat—tat !'

.....'Cri.....n.....g.... !'

Ina groaned and threw her instrument box on the table. "That's the fourth time this afternoon," she said in an accusing voice. "Why can't visitors keep reasonable hours? I'd like to know!"

I looked up from the map I was trying to complete. I suppose we both had every reason to feel wild. It was bad enough being tied down with a load of uninteresting homework on a Sunday afternoon. And

worse when it came to answering the door bell every fifteen minutes!

'Ratta—tat—tat !' The noise was more urgent this time.

"Tina, do be a dear and open the door," said Ina. "I must get this theorem fixed into my head!"

"Oh, very well," I said closing my atlas with a bang, "though I must say that geometry is far better than geography. Now if I had my choice...."

"Girls!" cried Grandma from the next room. "Have you both gone deaf? There's someone banging on the door for the last half-an-hour and you two are chatting away and doing nothing about it! Really, I don't know what the world is coming to! When I was a child...."

"I was just going down to see, grandma," I shouted, and made for the door. I could hear Teddy growling in Grandpa's study. A low but unmistakable growl. Obviously, it was someone he did not like!

I opened the door wondering who it could be. A battleship in white muslin sailed past me and planted herself on our drawing room sofa.

"Why if it isn't little Ina!" said a gushing voice. "Not asleep, were you?"

"No," I said.

"That's the thing to do! Never sleep during the day. So fattening!"

"Y...e...s," I said doubtfully, looking at the enormous apparition before me.

"And how's your elder sister, dear? The one in specs? I must say you resemble her greatly. In fact, I wouldn't have known you apart!"

"As a matter of fact, I'm the elder sister. But I don't wear specs," I said in a faltering voice. "Shall I call Grandma?"

"Yes, please, and what is your name if it isn't Ina?"

"I'm Tina," I said, and ran up to Grandma's room.

Grandma was sitting up on her bed. She usually enjoyed a little afternoon siesta, but she was unable to have one today because of the constant flow of visitors.



"Well, who is it *this* time?" she asked me as soon as I opened the door. "The dhobi, I presume?"

"No," I said trying to hide a smile, "it's a friend of yours."

"WHO IS IT?" asked Grandma again.

"Mrs. Batliwala," I said in a meek voice.

Grandpa, who had been dozing in the armchair by the window, sat up with a jerk. "What!" he cried, "Not THAT woman! Not again!"

"What do you mean?" said Grandma, in a stern voice. "And I do wish you would not refer to people in that language!"

"I can't help it," said Grandpa getting up. "I'm going for a walk, Tina. Send Teddy along, will you?"

"A walk! You can't go for a walk NOW," said Grandma, "it's not even three o'clock."

"And Mrs. Batliwala is sitting right in front of the lawn," I added. "She'd be sure to see you, Grandpa!"

"Help!" said Grandpa sitting down again. "Well then I'm NOT at home. Just you remember that, Tina, and warn Ina too!"

"It's quite absurd of you to make such a fuss just because Daulat has come in the afternoon!" said Grandma in a cross voice. "And HOW can you teach the children to tell a lie? Your own grandchildren, too!"

"It isn't lying," said Grandpa taking off his specs, "'not at home' means 'not ready to see visitors'. It's merely a polite way of saying that you can't see someone."

"I don't see anything polite about it," said Grandma. "It's the height of bad manners not to see one's visitors."

"Well, then you can tell her that I'm asleep, can't you?" said Grandpa lying down, "Tina, get me that strip of tablets, will you? It wouldn't be a lie, then."

"For heaven's sake lie down," said Grandma getting up. "I'll tell Daulat that you're resting, without any nonsense about not being at home or sleeping."

Grandpa lay down obediently and closed his eyes. "I only hope she doesn't stay all evening!" he muttered.

"You sound as though she is a cannibal instead of being a great social worker!" said Grandma. "To think that you've faced

dozens of man-eaters in the forest fearlessly and yet are afraid of a friend of mine!"

"Man-eaters don't gush!" said Grandpa. "Nor do they ask foolish questions and expect equally foolish answers!"

Before Grandma could think of a suitable retort, Ina burst into the room. "Grandma!" she said breathlessly, "Mrs. Batliwala asked me to tell you that she is in a hurry, so couldn't you and Grandpa come down soon?"

"Why me?" cried Grandpa, "I'd be totally useless in her social work stunts, and I'm asleep, in any case!"

"Oh, no, you're not!" said Ina laughing. "We could hear you all the way downstairs and Mrs. Batliwala heard you, too!"

"Good gracious!" cried Grandma, shooting out of the room like a bullet. "Girls, you'd better send your grandpa down!"

Grandpa threw up his hands in despair. Ina and I burst out laughing. Mrs. Batliwala made a beeline for Grandpa whenever she came, and Grandpa hated it!

Mrs. Batliwala was a very busy lady, always organising fetes and charities, bazaars and garden parties. Her visits inevitably meant collections in some form or the other. I vaguely wondered what it would be this time, when Grandpa said, "What does she want this time?"

"Eatables!" said Ina promptly.

"Eatables!" said Grandpa blinking hard. "Did you say *eatables*, Ina?"

"I did," said Ina. "She is organising a party for the cooks this time, so she wants all the fare to come from outside."

"What!" cried Grandpa, disbelievably. "A party for cooks? She has only one cook so far as I know."

"You don't understand at all," said Ina laughing. "She has written letters to all her friends, inviting their cooks to this party. She said that forty of them have already accepted."

Grandpa took off his specs and wiped them vigorously. "But why pitch on us?" he said. "She knows that we don't have a cook!"

"Perhaps she wants Grandma to give them a talk," I suggested.

"No fears!" said Ina. "If anyone has to do any talking, Mrs. Batliwala will!"

"Yes, but she knows nothing about cooking and Grandma does," I said.

"It's far more likely that she's after your grandma's pickles," said Grandpa who, like Tina and myself, had an incurable craze for them.

Just then Teddy bounced into the room, his tail wagging nineteen to the dozen. "Hello, old boy!" said Ina, giving him a pat. "What have you got in your mouth?"

Teddy calmly dropped a wriggling caterpillar in the middle of Grandma's flower vase. "Ugh!" cried Ina with a shudder. "You're getting awful, Teddy!"

"It's getting to be a positive habit!" I

remarked. "Teddy is forever dropping something into something these days!"

"First it was the snake in the gardener's rug," said Ina, with another shudder, as she recalled one of Teddy's latest scrapes.

"Then these twigs in Grandpa's water jug," I said, "and now this horrid caterpillar in Grandma's flower vase!"

"Ina! Tina!" shouted Grandma from the drawing room. "Do ask your grandpa to come downstairs, will you?"

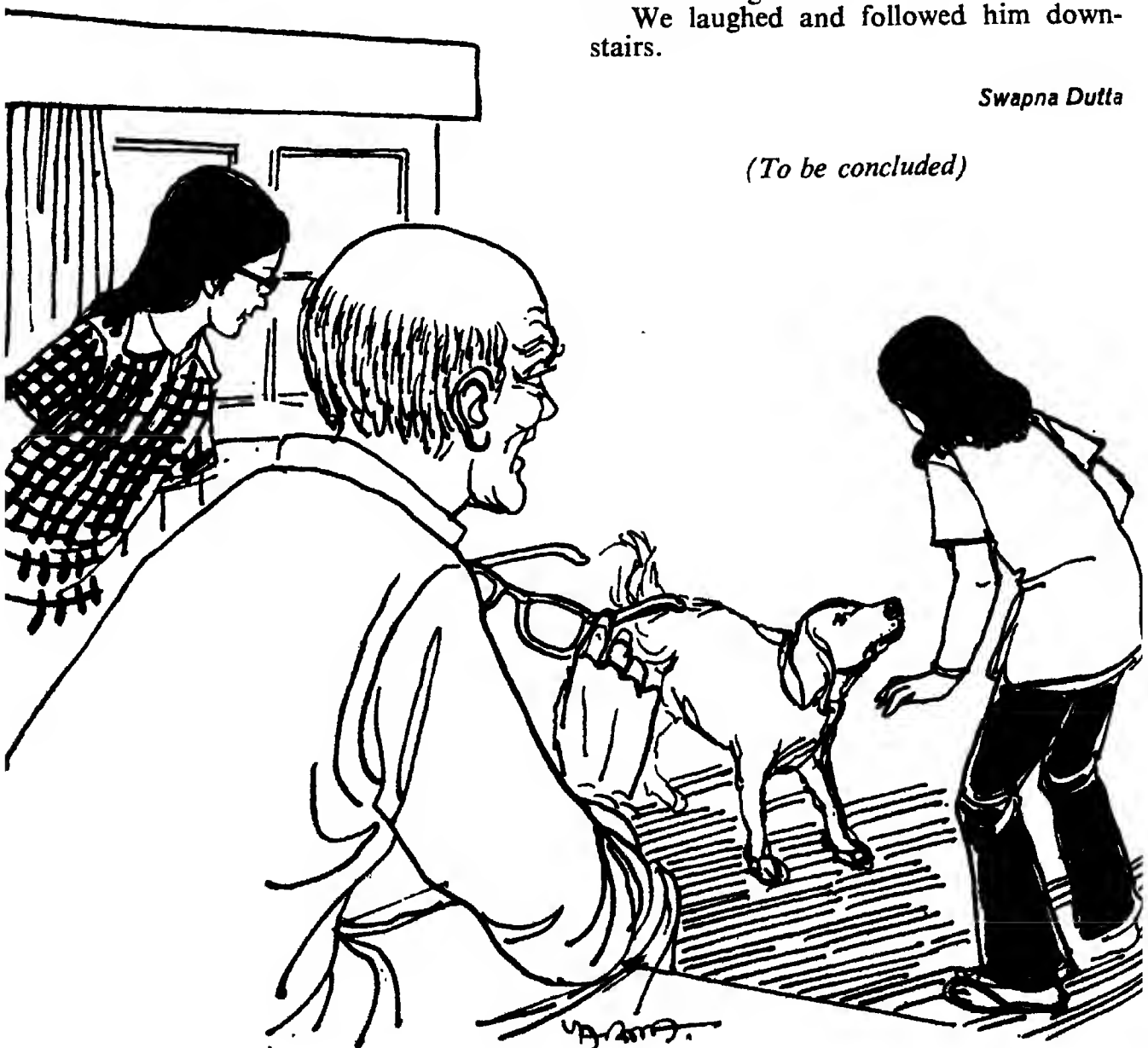
"Yes, Grandma!" we shouted in a chorus.

"There's no help for it!" said Grandpa getting up. "Come on, girls, let's face the hurricane together!"

We laughed and followed him downstairs.

Swapna Dutta

(To be concluded)



A Sneeze and...the Lion **FROZE!**

IN a forest by the side of a river, there lived a poor woodcutter and his wife. The two loved each other very much and lived happily. The old man would spend the day in the forest, felling trees and chopping wood. Some of the wood he would carry in his small boat, to be sold in the town across the river. At times, when the old woman felt like going to the town to meet her friends, the man would row her across.

One day, the woodcutter came upon a lion in the forest. He had not eaten for many days, and so he was very hungry. The lion looked at the woodcutter from head to toe, and the poor old man trembled!

"What is it you want, O King of the forest?" asked the woodcutter. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Yes," growled the lion. "Prepare yourself for death. I'm going to eat you!"

The old man looked around to see if there was any chance to save his life. Though he had his axe in his hand, he knew that before a lion, an axe was of little or no use. He had killed many wolves with his axe. But being the King of the forest, the lion was not afraid of anybody.

"Can't you see, O King of the forest, that I am very old?" said the woodcutter. "If you're hungry, you need flesh to fill your stomach. You can very well see I am all bones! You cannot hope to get even a little flesh from my body. And you need much more!"

"But today I just love chewing bones!" said the lion.

"But the bones must be nice and tender!" said the clever woodcutter. "My bones are hard as steel. You may lose all your teeth! They may break!"

"But I am hungry!" roared the lion. "Have you anything else to offer me for my lunch? Decide at once!"

"Why, I'm sure you would like to have a whole goat to yourself! Wouldn't you?"

"Goat?" said the lion, smacking his

lips. "Yes, goat's flesh is delicious! Bring it to me at once!"

"I have one at home," said the woodcutter.

"Come on, then," said the lion, "let's go to your house. I can wait no longer!"

"But you see, O King of the forest, the goat has gone to the town. My wife has taken the goat to sell the milk."

"When will she return?" asked the lion.

"In the evening," said the woodcutter. "It's just midday, you'll have to wait for sometime, but I'm sure when you see the goat, you'll be pleased."

"All right," said the lion. "Make sure you have the goat ready. I'll be at your place by evening."

"Very well!" said the woodcutter.

"And listen, if you fail to have the goat ready, I will eat not only you but also your



old woman! I hope you have understood!" the lion warned him.

When the lion had gone, the woodcutter hurried home to tell his wife.

"What shall we do?" cried the old man. "We have no goat!"

The woman thought for a moment. Then she said, "I've an idea. Let's row across the river to the town. We shall live there. The lion would not dare enter the town to search for us. Besides, the lion cannot cross the river!"

"But what about our home?" said the old woodcutter pensively. "We cannot just leave our hut!"

"Our lives are more precious!" said his wife. "We shall find another place to live in."

"And what about the household, our 'charpoys', the big pitchers?"

"Wait a minute!" cried the old woman. "I've got an idea. First let's carry our things to the river. Then we shall find ways of taking them across. If we fail, I still have another idea."

So, the woodcutter and his wife hurried down to the river. Their boat was there. But as they neared the river, they saw the lion sitting on the bank! Perhaps he was waiting for the old woman to return from the town with the goat!

"He's a very cunning lion!" cried the woodcutter.

"Come on, then," said the old woman. "I have another idea. There's some time left before he comes. Come on, let's hurry back to our hut!"

The woodcutter and his wife rushed back to the hut. They were trembling with fear. Soon the lion would come, and demand his goat! He would not take another excuse!

The old woman looked at the pitchers. One of the pitchers was huge. Both of them could easily hide in it. And the lion would not know! He would come and, on finding nobody in the hut, return to the forest. Then, in the night, they could slip away to the town. The plan was just wonderful!

Suddenly, they heard the lion roaring! He had come! It was already evening.

"Quick! Jump into that pitcher!" cried the old woman.

"But-but-but-" blurted the old man.

"No buts!" cried his wife. "This is our only chance! Hurry!"

The woodcutter quickly got into the pitcher. Then the woman got in. They placed the lid on position.

"Aaaaaaaggggggaouuuuuuu!" roared the lion, as he entered the hut. "Where are you, old man? Where is the goat?"

The woodcutter and his wife held tightly to each other. What if the lion removed the lid and peeped into the pitcher?

The lion began sniffing around. "I smell the flesh of man in this hut!" he growled.

"What shall we do?" asked the old man.

"Sshhhh!" warned his wife. "The lion will hear you!"

"I want to cough," whispered the old man.

"Hold it up!" said his wife. "When the lion goes away, you can cough your teeth out!"

"But I cannot wait that long!" said the woodcutter.

"All right, then," said the old woman.

"But make sure you cough softly."

"I will," said the woodcutter. He coughed once, but luckily the lion did not hear it.

He looked under the charpoys. Then he

(Turn to page 47)



From Greek Mythology : PAN

".....the great god Pan
Down in the reeds by the river."

THESE lines are from a poem on Pan, the nature god. He was not 'great' by any chance, and was actually a simple meek fellow, quite undistinguished by the vices and malice, which characterised the other gods. He had no ambitions, and was content to live in rural Arcadia, on earth. A humble harmless god, his main characteristic was a sportive playfulness, which led him to chase and harry the Arcadian nymphs.

Accounts differ as to who Pan's father was; some say it was Hermes; others believe it was Cronus, and some think it was Zeus himself. But all agree that this poor god was so ugly when he was born that even his mother fled from him in terror! He had goat's legs, a tail, beard, and horns; Hermes carried him up to Olympus, to amuse the other deities.

But despite his physical defects, he was easy-going and rather lovable. He spent his time tending flocks and herds and guarding the beehives in Arcadia. He also helped hunters run down their prey, and



loved to join in the revels of the mountain nymphs. His favourite pastime was sleeping, and he was often found fast asleep in some cool, shady grove. If anyone dared to disturb his siesta, his only method of revenge was a loud shout, which terrified them. From this shout and his name, we get the word 'panic'.

However, the Arcadians had no respect or fear of him, and frequently chastised him with quills if their day's hunting was poor.

In almost all pictures and sculptures, Pan is depicted as wearing a fir chaplet, and playing on his reed pipe. There is an interesting legend regarding these accessories of his. On one occasion, when he was chasing the chaste nymph Pitys, she was so terrified that she prayed to be saved from him and was transformed into a fir tree. Ever since, Pan has always been shown with a chaplet, made from a branch

of a fir.

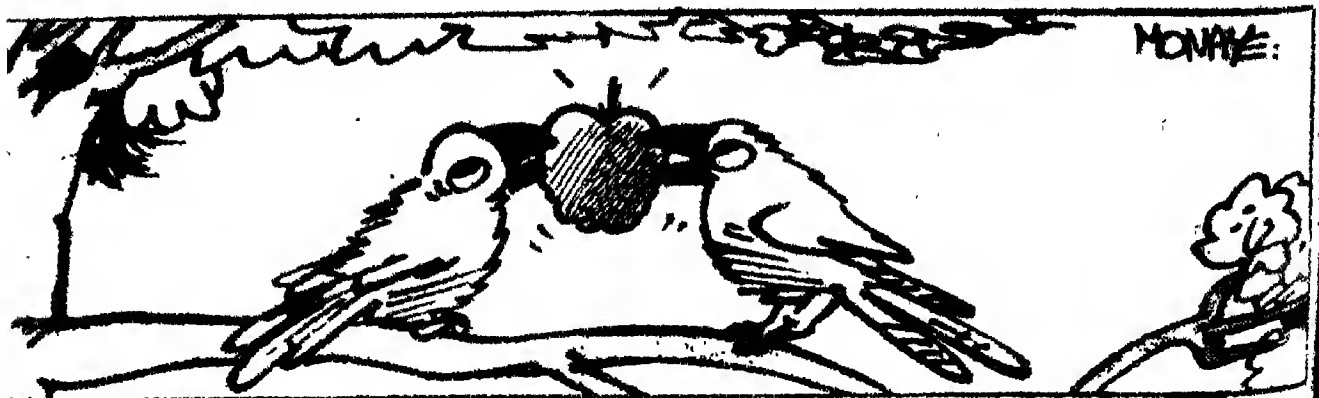
Another time, when he was running after the nymph Syrinx, from Mount Lycaeus to the river Ladon, she became a reed to escape him. Unable to distinguish her from the other reeds in the river, he cut several of them, and made them into his celebrated Pan-pipe, which played the most beautiful tunes.

The other gods, though despising him and mocking at him for his simplicity, did not hesitate to make use of Pan. Apollo wheedled the art of prophecy from him and Hermes, copying a pipe he had let fall, pretended it was his own innovation and sold it to Apollo.

This gentle, unassuming god was the only one to die, and the news of his passing away was shouted by a divine voice to a sailor called Thamus.

Geeta Chowdhry

ANIMAL WORLD

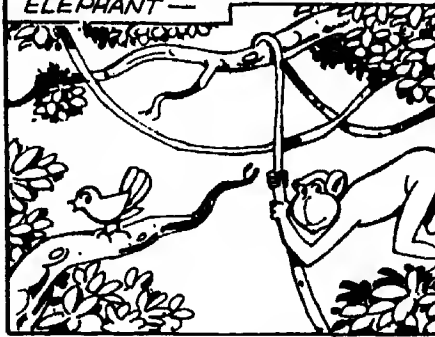


KAPISH

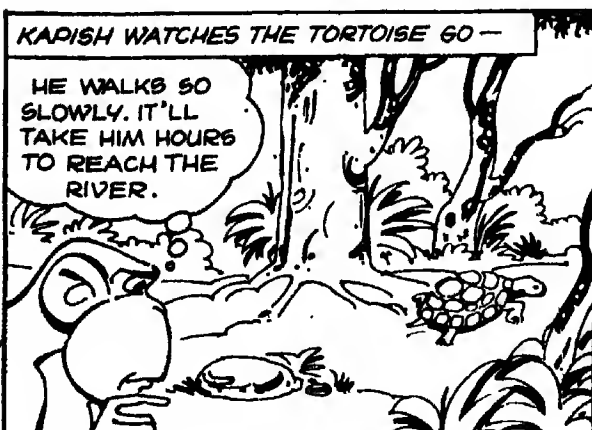
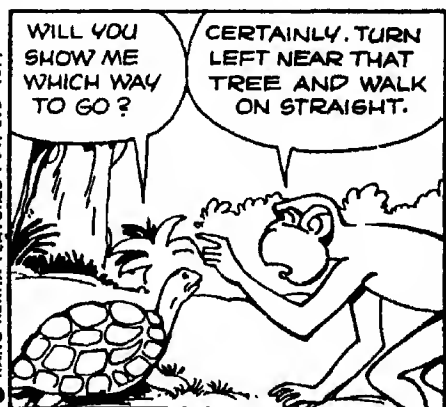
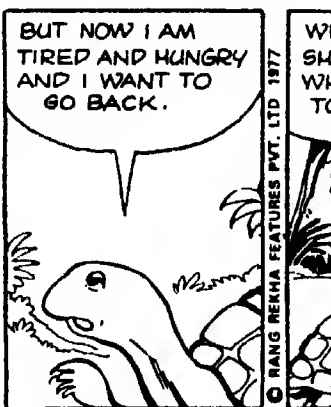
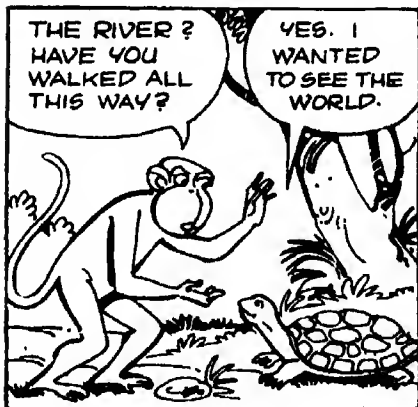


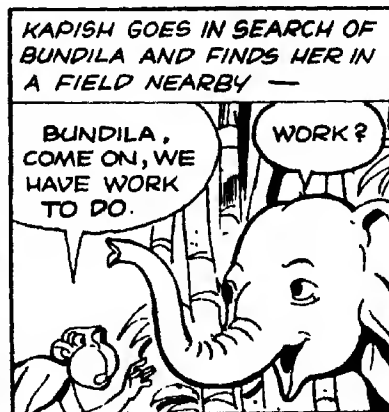
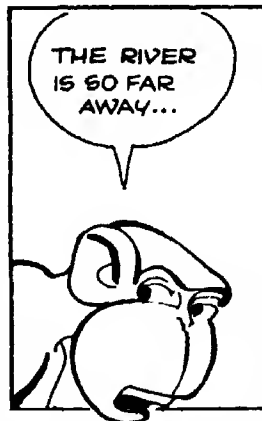
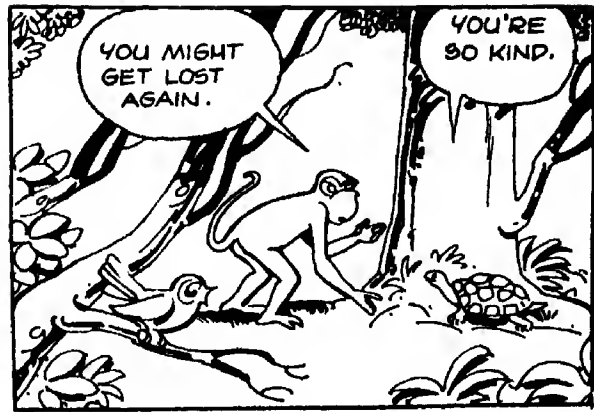
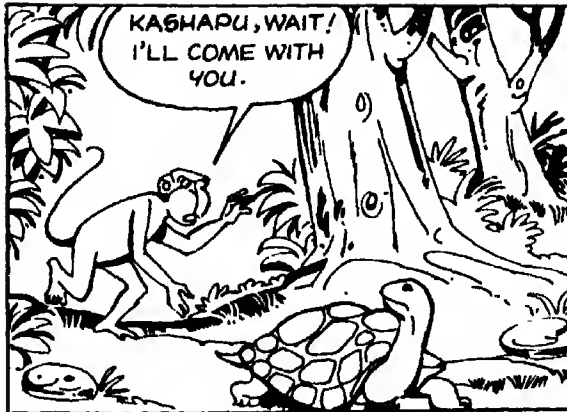
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● MOHANDAS

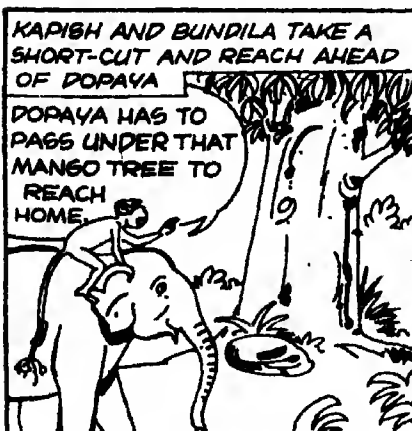
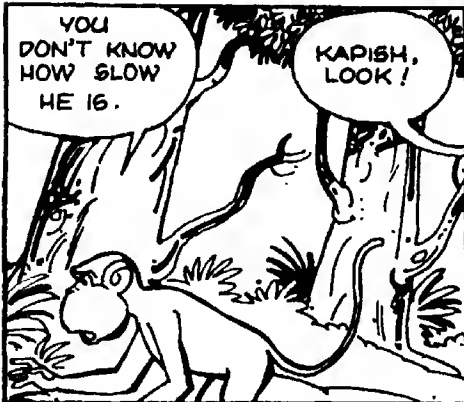
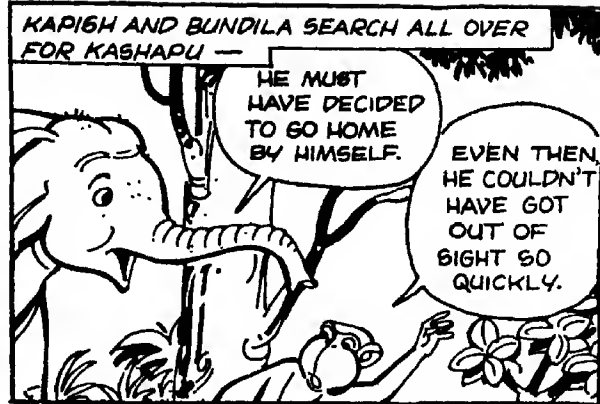
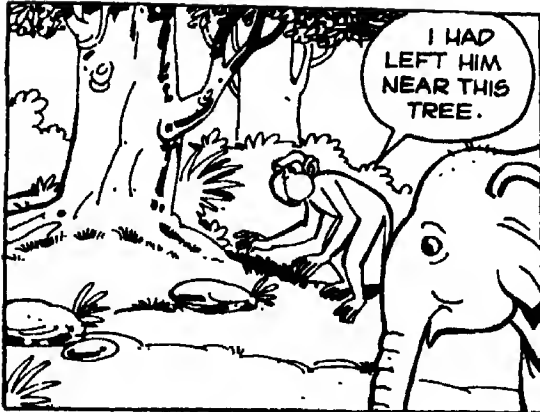
KAPISH IS ON HIS WAY TO MEET
HIS FRIEND, BUNDILA, THE
ELEPHANT —



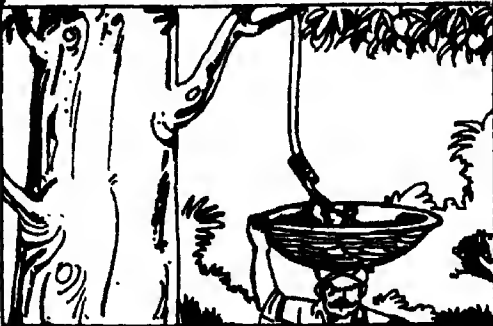
SUDDENLY—



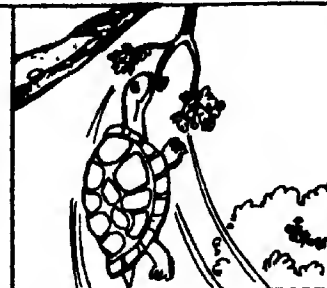




AS DOPAYA PASSES UNDER THE TREE, KAPISH LENGTHENS HIS TAIL AND LOWERS IT INTO HIS BASKET—



KASHAPU CATCHES THE TWIG IN HIS MOUTH...



...AND IMMEDIATELY FINDS HIMSELF BEING LIFTED INTO THE AIR.

BUT DOPAYA REALISES THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG—



MY BASKET HAS SUDDENLY BECOME LIGHT.



MY TORTOISE! BRING BACK MY TORTOISE, YOU THIEF!



HE'S THROWING STONES.

DON'T BE AFRAID. STAY CLOSE TO ME.

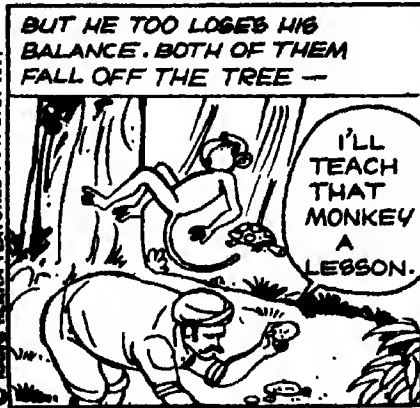


LET'S HIDE AMONG THOSE LEAVES... AHH!

KASHAPU!



KASHAPU HAS LOST HIS BALANCE. KAPISH DIVES FORWARD TO SAVE HIM...



BUT HE TOO LOSES HIS BALANCE. BOTH OF THEM FALL OFF THE TREE—

I'LL TEACH THAT MONKEY A LESSON.



KAPISH AND KASHAPU FALL ON DOPAYA, KNOCKING HIM DOWN.

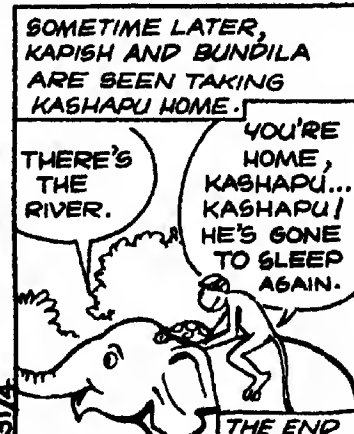
BUNDILA! BUNDILA!

POW



DOPAYA DAZED BY THE FALL, SEES BUNDILA COMING AND RUNS AWAY IN PANIC—

SHE'S COMING TO ATTACK ME!!



SOMETIME LATER, KAPISH AND BUNDILA ARE SEEN TAKING KASHAPU HOME.

THERE'S THE RIVER.

YOU'RE HOME, KASHAPU... KASHAPU! HE'S GONE TO SLEEP AGAIN.

THE END

WHEN I told my friends and my teachers that I had visited 15th century London, they laughed at me, and when I described to them all that I had seen, they said I have a very good imagination. So, I just shut my mouth and didn't say a word more. But now that I know *you* will believe me, why not let me tell you all about it?

The night before last, it was raining and I was snuggling in my bed with a book on London. I was reading about Buckingham Palace, Hyde Park, the Tower of London...when, all of a sudden, I felt sort of dizzy and, then, when my head cleared, I found myself standing in the middle of a great hall in something like a castle. I was clad in a red-and-black page boy's uniform. It was while I was admiring the golden buttons that I saw a Yeoman or rather Beefeater, as he is popularly known these days, stepping into the hall.

"Now, my laddie, what would you be doing here? Run along to your work," he said, pushing me by my shoulder.

So, I just slipped out through the first door on my left. For quite some time, I wandered aimlessly around the castle until I came to the Traitor's Gate, which opens into the River Thames, and recognised the place as the Tower of London. It was by chance that I reached the farther end of the castle and stood near Martin Tower; this, I remembered, was where the Crown Jewels once used to be kept. Later, they were moved to Wakefield Tower. On coming closer, I observed that the Tower was closely guarded.

"What's in there?" I casually asked a passerby.

"You be ignorant, my son? Don't you know that the Crown Jewels are kept there?" He went away shaking his head disapprovingly.

So, I thought the attempt to steal the Crown Jewels hadn't as yet been made! Oh, how thrilling it was to be transported in time even before A.D. 1671! I was still contemplating on my good luck, when I saw a clergyman talking to one of the guards. Now I know very well that I am not really clever at Maths and Geography,

ADVENTURE THROUGH HISTORY



but I have a lot of interest in History and I can never forget a thing once I read it. This particular situation rang a bell to me:

Oh, yes, it was so simple — this was Colonel Blood, dressed as a clergyman, and if my facts were right, then the Crown Jewels were to be stolen soon. My interest was suddenly aroused and I began to watch more closely.

Colonel Blood was talking to a guard who was rather aged. They seemed to be



on good terms. I ventured closer hoping to catch some part of their conversation.

"Now, Talbot, tell me, when are these guards changed? You know I require every detail for the article I am writing," it was Colonel Blood talking to Talbot Edwards the guard.

The poor man unwittingly gave away all the information. I know I had to do something. The guards would be changed in an hour and I knew Colonel Blood would then strike and attempt to steal

the jewels.

At first, I didn't know what to do, but then an idea hit me. I went around asking for Talbot Edwards's son. After a long while, I found him and told him about the bid to steal the Crown Jewels. At first, he took me for a lunatic, but with much difficulty, I convinced him and he agreed to go with me.

As we rushed into the Tower, we found Talbot lying wounded at the entrance and, on entering, we beheld three men. One was Colonel Blood, the other two his accomplices. We caught them

red-handed, trying to hide the jewels inside their clothes. Blood had got hold of the Crown and hidden it under his cloak.

We restored the jewels to their rightful place and the guards took the culprits down to the dungeon, but as he left, Colonel Blood exclaimed, "It was a brave attempt, for it was for a Crown!"

Suddenly, I felt dizzy and as my head cleared, I found myself back in my bed.

Well, now, *you* don't really believe that it was all my imagination, do you?

Rita Bhatia

If I Were a Pretty Dress...

I AM a very pretty dress. I have green and red on me. I belonged to a shopkeeper. I was hung on the hanger in the middle of the wall. Beside me I had many friends hanging, too. Many people came and asked the shopkeeper about the dress. They couldn't buy me because I was too costly. Then they would walk out of the shop sadly.

One day, a very pretty girl wanted to buy a dress. She came into the shop and bought me, because I was the best of all. The shopkeeper packed me and gave it to the girl. I was very sad to leave my friends. But, when I reached my new house, I had more friends there.

Now my mistress used to say that I am the prettiest dress of hers. She loves going for parties. She puts me on most of the time. When she gets ready, I feel very happy because I know that she is going to wear me. She washes me with soap and

water when her party is over. Sometimes she takes other dresses but not me; then I feel very jealous. And when she takes me, I enjoy to see people dancing and singing. There are lots of all sorts of things to see and enjoy. Whenever my mistress wears me, everyone tells her that this is a very pretty dress, and asks her from where she got me. My mistress then tells everything.

Once my mistress's friend took me for a few days. She was very bad; she was not kind at all. After wearing me, she would just throw me in the cupboard. After a week, my own mistress came to meet her friend. When she saw me in such a bad condition, she felt sorry for me, and took me home. She washed me with soap and water. I felt very pleased. Now I enjoy my time like before.

Gireeja Seth (9)
India

India Vs. Australia, England

THE just concluded India-Australia cricket series, coming in the wake of the 'Packer Circus', was watched with great interest by cricket lovers all over the world. Australia had to do without most of their star players except, of course, the dreaded paceman, Thomson.

India went to Brisbane for the first Test with the record of having won all the eight pre-Test matches.

Simpson won the toss for Australia and elected to bat. But the home team made a disastrous start, losing 5 wickets for 49. The rescue came in the person of Peter Toohey, who made a solid 82. The extent of his control over the bowling can

Mohinder Amarnath hits off Yardley to be caught by Callan for 86 runs (5th Test at Adelaide).



be seen from the fact that he scored all the 34 runs for the last wicket. Australia were all out for 166, the main damage having been done by Bedi, who took 5 for 55. But the revenge was done in good measure by Wayne Clark (4/46), Tony Mann (3/12), and Thomson (3/54), who bundled out India for a paltry 153, despite Vengsarkar (48) and Viswanath (45).

Australia again had a bad start in the second innings, losing 3 wickets for just 7 runs. But Simpson scored a grand 89 with partnerships of 93 for the 4th wicket with Ogilvie and 84 for the 5th wicket with Toohey, and helped Australia score 327. In doing this, Simpson, coming back to Test cricket after 10 years, took his first class runs total past the 20,000 mark, a distinction earlier earned by only two Australians, Sir Donald Bradman and Neil Harvey.

Set to score 341 for a win, India was helped by a solid 113 by opener Sunil Gavaskar. Then wickets fell one after another, and Australia seemed fully on top, when Indian skipper Bedi (26 not out) joined Kirmani (55) and put on 43 defiant runs for the 9th wicket. But Australia had the last laugh and won the match by 17 runs. Thomson took 4/46 and Clark 4/101.

India made two changes for the second Test at Perth. Chetan Chauhan came in place of Mankad, and Venkataraghavan replaced Prasanna. Bedi won the toss and the Indian batsmen piled up 402 runs, thanks largely due to a solid 88 by Chauhan and a fighting 90 by Mohinder Amarnath. In the Australian reply, Bobby Simpson was once again the hero, hitting out a glorious 176, which was to be the highest individual score of the series. It was his ninth Test century and his third in eight Tests against India. The Aussies conceded a first innings lead of only 8 runs. Bedi took 5/89, registering a haul of 5 or more wickets in an innings for the 13th time in Test cricket.

In the second innings, India seemed to be heading towards an unassailable position when they made 240 for the loss of one wicket. But then eight wickets fell for 90 runs and India declared at 330/9. There were two centuries in the Indian innings, a gallant 127 by Gavaskar and a brilliant 100 by Amarnath. They together put on 193 runs for the second wicket, a record for India against Australia for any wicket—the previous best being 188 by Vijay Hazare and Dattu Phadkar in 1947-48. Gavaskar also completed 3,000 runs in Test cricket in only his 34th appearance. Sam Gannon, who took 4/77, was the most successful bowler for Australia.

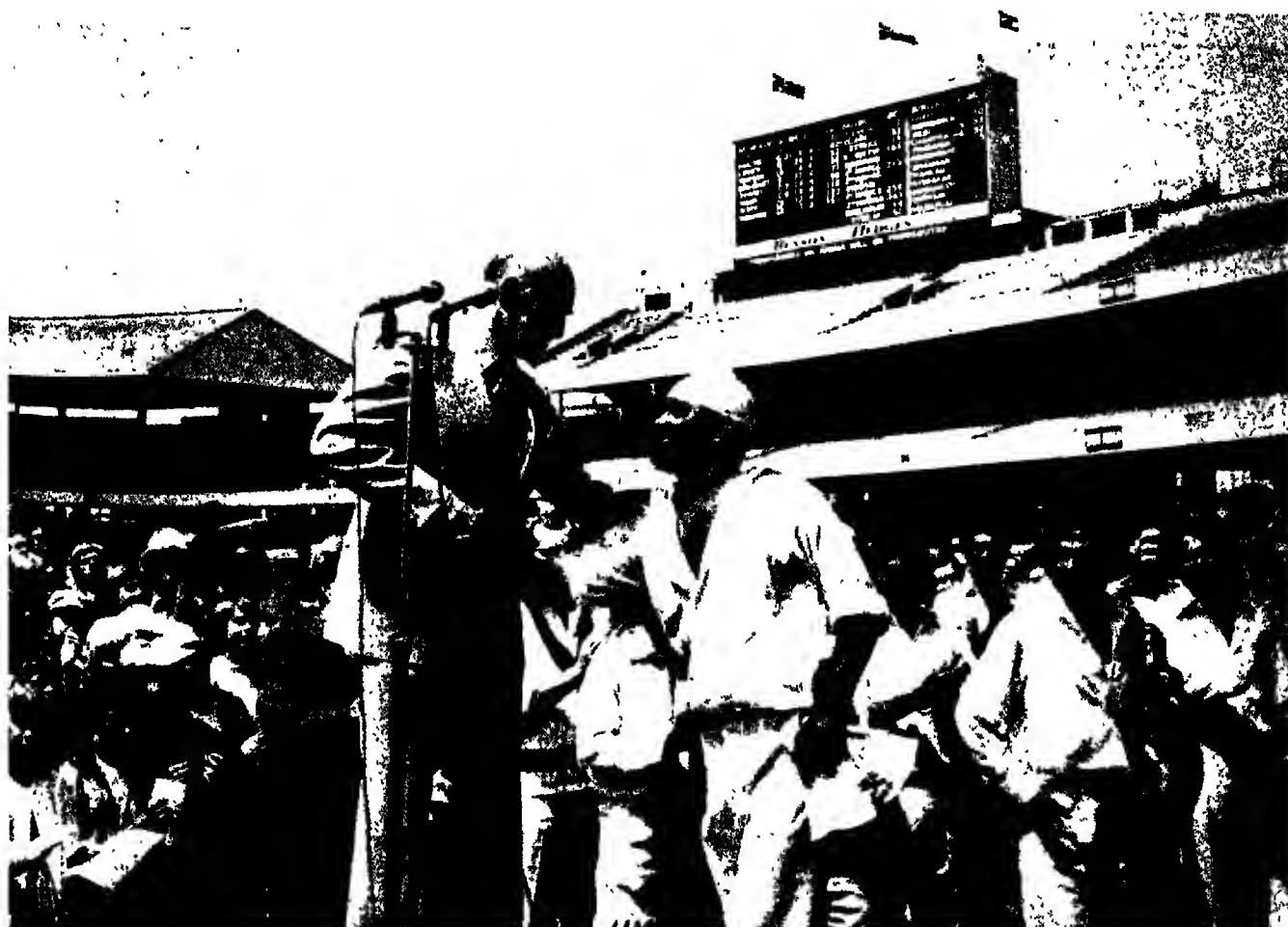
Set to score 339 for a win, Australia started disastrously losing 4 wickets for 35 runs. Then there was a gallant fight-back by night watchman Tony Mann, who made 105 precious runs, the highest by any night watchman, beating the earlier record of 98 by Harold Larwood of England against Australia way back in 1932-33. Australia was still not out of the woods.

Even as the runs were being scored, wickets fell at regular intervals. Eventually, after many nerve-wrangling moments, Thomson made the winning stroke with two wickets remaining, when only 23 balls of the mandatory overs were left.

After two victories, Australia naturally decided to retain the same team for the 3rd and 4th Tests. But India made three changes, leaving Patel, Madan Lal and Venkat out and including Mankad, Ghavri and Prasanna.

The third Test at Melbourne was crucial for India. Bedi began well by winning the toss, but Indian batting again had a bad start losing two wickets with not a run on board. But Amarnath (72) and Viswanath (59) helped the visitors to a reasonable total of 256. Clark claimed 4/73. Even this modest total seemed quite

The Indian captain, Bishen Singh Bedi, being congratulated by the President of the Victorian Cricket Association, Mr. Ray Steele, after India had won the third Test at Melbourne—the first time India were winning a Test match in Australia. Behind Bedi can be seen Kirmani (clapping), Geakwad (wearing glasses), Amarnath and Chandrasekhar.



good when Chandrasekhar bowled out the hosts for 213 runs despite a gallant 85 by Serjeant and 67 by Cosier. Chandra, whose first victim was his 200th in Test cricket, finished with a magnificent 6/52.

In the Indian second innings, Gavaskar (118), notwithstanding his consistent failures in the first innings, scored his third consecutive Test 100s in as many matches. India were all out for 343, leaving Australia with a victory target of 387. Chandrasekhar who, in batting, had earned the record of scoring a "pair" in four consecutive Tests, ensured India's victory by taking six second innings wickets also. India won by a creditable margin of 222 runs. Chandra's match haul of 12 wickets bettered his earlier best of 11 wickets against West Indies in Bombay in 1967. For India, it was the fourth Test win over Australia, but the first in Australia.

The fourth Test at Sydney again belonged to the Indian bowlers. Australia,

who batted first, were bundled out for a mere 131 by Chandrasekhar (4/30) and Bedi (4/49). In reply, the visitors made 396 for eight and declared. The main scorers were Viswanath (79) and Ghavri (64). Australia, who needed 265 to save an innings defeat, were all out for 263 despite some good batting by Cosier (68) and Toohey (85). For India, Prasanna took 4/51.

So, the fifth Test at Adelaide was to be decisive. India made one change in the team, Gaekwad replacing Mankad. But Australia thoroughly overhauled the team, introducing four new faces in Test—Wood, Darling, Yardley, and Callan.

Simpson again won the toss and the gamble of including so many new faces paid well for the team. It was a virtual run-riot for the home team. Helped by two centuries by Graham Yallop (121) and skipper Simpson (100), Australia piled up a massive 505. Chandra claimed 5/136, taking his total tally to 28, a record for an Indian series against Australia, beating Prasanna's 26 in 1967-68. India were all out in the first innings for 269, conceding

Australian test bowler, Jeff Thomson, sends Ashok Mankad's leg stump cartwheeling as the Indian batsman drives to get an inside edge (4th Test at Sydney).



a match winning lead of 236 to the home team. The only sparkle of the Indian innings was an 89 by Viswanath, who also completed his 3,000 runs in Tests.

The Australian second innings was restricted to 256 by Bedi (4/53) and Ghavri (4/45). Chasing a target of 493, India was blessed by the absence of Thomson. They took up the challenge well. Amarnath (86), Vengsarkar (78), Viswanath (73), and Kirmani (51), all fought for a victory, every inch of the way. Ultimately, on his 42nd birthday, the gallant Australian captain, Bobby Simpson, dismissed Chandrasekhar to clinch the Test by 47 runs, as also the series.

On the whole, the series was a very enjoyable one, with chances fluctuating either way.

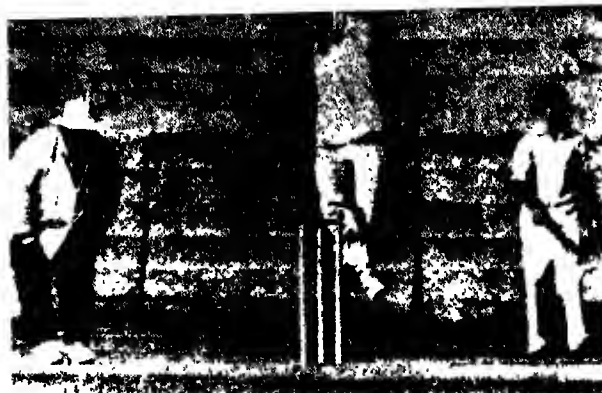
Even as India was touring Australia, an English schoolboys' team were playing four 'Tests' in India. It was no kids' game! Some of the very finest of cricket was seen here.

In the first Test at Bombay, the Indian schoolboys batted first and scored 278 runs, the top scorer being the wicket-keeper captain Ved Raj (94). In their reply, the visiting boys were restricted to 212 by P. Rathod (4/40) and A. Vatsalya (4/77). Scoring 218 in the second innings, the Indian schoolboys made the guests chase a target of 285. But some brilliant bowling by Sharma (5 wickets) and Rathod (4 wickets) helped the hosts register a comfortable 194-run victory.

In the second Test at Delhi, the visitors were restricted to 157 by Sharma (4/40) and Vatsalya (3/60). The Indian boys in reply made 350, helped by Suresh Kumar (62) and Ved Raj (83). In the second innings, the English boys piled up 307, aided by a brilliant 101 by Brearley. The hosts again won by 5 wickets, despite some fine bowling by Parsons (3/32).

The third Test at Calcutta saw the visitors being dismissed for 160. But the hosts also could not muster anything more than 174. Helped by Barnett (92), the English boys made 264 in the second innings. A. Bhattacharya took 6/116. The English schoolboys won the match by 115 runs.

At Madras, the Indian boys declared



In the school boys' cricket Test at Delhi, the England bowler G. Parsons is seen in action.



Above: The Indian captain Ved Raj takes a drive. Below: Khanvalkar is clean bowled by Parsons (not in the picture).



their first innings at 443/9 thanks to Ved Raj (103) and Menon (87). In reply, the English boys could muster only 199 in the face of fiery bowling by Zeeshan Mohammed (4/22). Following on, however, the visitors fought back gallantly and forced a draw scoring 341 (Taylor 57, Pringle 55).

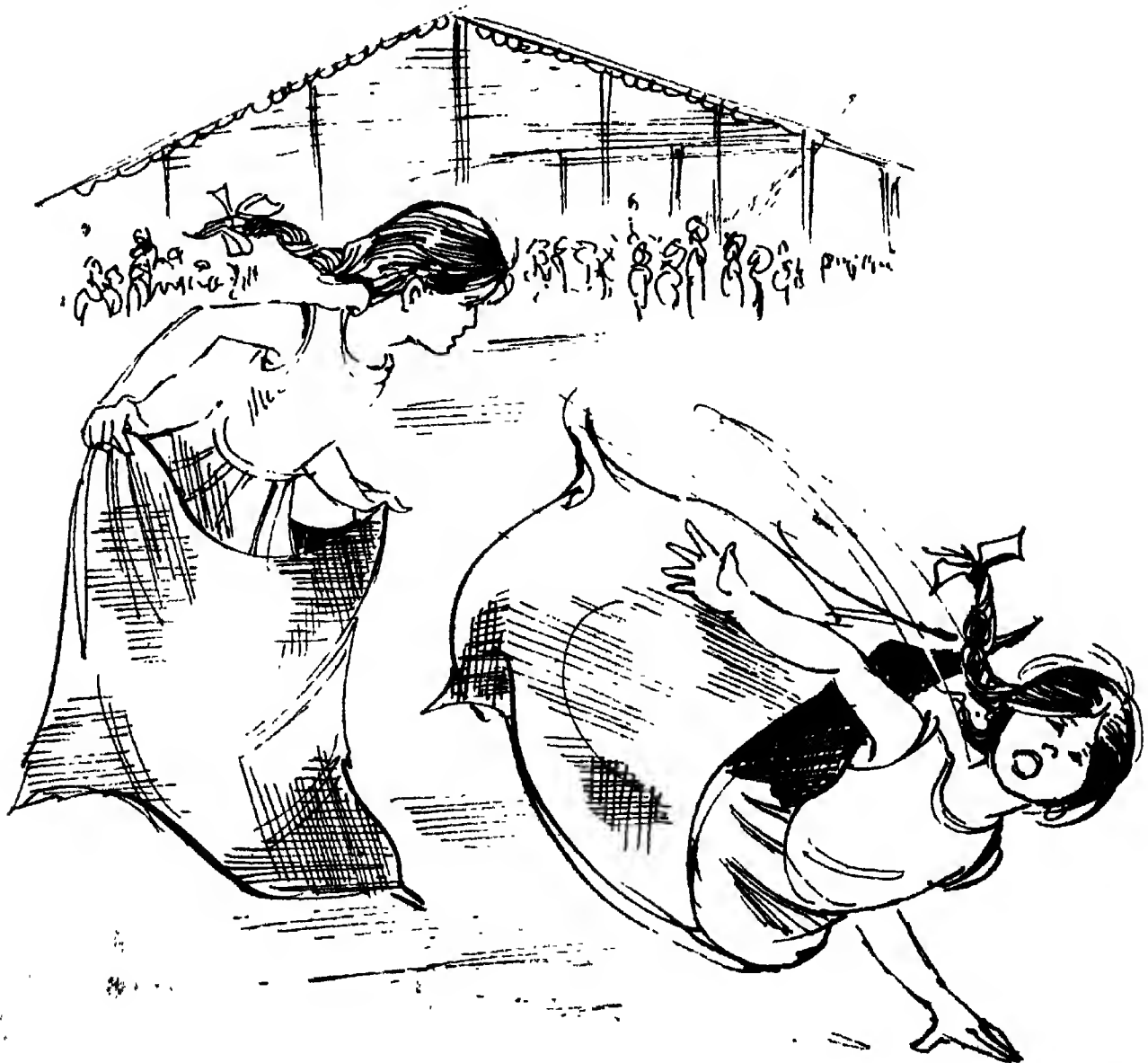
Radhakrishnan

SPORTS DAY

IT was Sports Day at Raja and Moni's school. There was a huge, coloured tent, where everybody sat to watch the events and eat ice-cream. Khokha was there with Thamma and eating his fourth ice-cream. "Where is Raja, Thamma?" he asked between each lick. "Where is Moni?"

It was difficult to find Raja and Moni. All the children looked the same in their white shorts and skirts. Even Moni couldn't be seen. "Are they lost, Thamma? Are they lost?" asked Khokha.

"No," said Grandmother, "they must be sitting with their teacher."



Yes, Raja and Moni were sitting with their teachers. Moni was to take part in the sack race, and Raja was in the obstacle race.

"I will win," said Moni, the clever girl. "I can run very fast."

"You can't run in a sack," said Raja. "You have to jump."

"No, I can run," said Moni. "My sack is very clever. Just like me."

"I am hungry," said Raja.

It was time for Moni's sack race. She stood in line and got into the sack.

"There she is! There is Moni!" cried Khokha, almost dropping his ice-cream. "Come on, Moni!"

There! the whistle blew and off went Moni, trying to win the race. But as soon as she ran two steps, she fell down. The sack could not run.

"Silly, silly sack," said Moni, getting up. "You can't even run, I don't want you." So Moni got out of the sack and ran to the finishing line. "I am first, I am first!" she said to the teacher who was holding the ribbon.

"Moni is first, Moni is first!" screamed Khokha from the tent.

"No," said the teacher. "I am sorry, but you can win only if you come in the sack."

"But the sack can't run," said Moni. "It is silly sack."

"Never mind," said the teacher. "Next time we will get you a clever sack."

So Moni, the clever girl, went to the tent and sat there with Khokha and Thamma.

"Never mind," said Khokha. "If you did not win, Raja will win."

Raja was not thinking of winning. He was feeling very, very hungry. 'If only Sports Day would get over,' he thought, 'I could go home and eat chapatis. My stomach is making such a noise.' But there were still so many races, and Raja's stomach only made louder and louder noises.

Suddenly, Raja smelt jalebis, sweet, syrupy jalebis. He looked around and saw a teacher coming with a plate of hot, juicy, yellow jalebis. "Is that for me?" asked Raju. "Is that for me, Teacher?"

"No," said the Teacher. "No, Raja.

This is for your race. They will be tied up on a line, and whoever eats it up and reaches the finishing line first wins the race."

"Oh," said Raja. "That means I'll get only one jalebi."

"Yes," said Teacher. "How can you win the race if you wait to eat all the jalebis?"

But Raja was not thinking of winning. He was feeling very, very hungry.

When the teacher tied all the jalebis on a line, it looked funny.

"See, Thamma," said Khokha, "the jalebis have been put to dry in the sun."

"Don't be silly," said Moni, who was a clever girl. "This is school, not home where you put things to dry."

"The jalebis are part of the race," said Thamma. "Each boy has to eat one



jalebi and then run. Whoever finishes first wins the race."

"I can win easily," said Moni. "I can run very fast."

"I can win hundred times more," boasted Khokha. "I can eat very fast."

"Let's see what Raja does," said Thamma. "He is in this race. See, there he is!"

Raja was standing on the starting line with all the other boys. He was feeling hungrier and hungrier. He was feeling as if he could eat a whole elephant of jalebis.

The whistle blew and Raja was off, faster than everybody. He ate up his

jalebi in a flash.

"Raja is first, Raja is first"! sang Khokha. But wait. What was Raja doing now? Instead of running to the finishing line, Raja was running across the field, eating up the rest of the jalebis that were hanging there!

Teacher was so angry that she made Raja go and sit with Moni, Khokha and Thamma. "You think only of eating," she told Raja. "You could have won the race."

But Raja was not thinking of winning. He was thinking of his stomach that had stopped making noises at last.

Poile

The Spider and the Ladybird

ONCE upon a time, there lived a mother spider who got married to a ladybird. When the mother gave birth, she gave birth to both a spider and a ladybird.

The Spider grew up. The Ladybird grew up. The time came for them to seek their fortune. Now these two, the Spider and the Ladybird, had a very dear friend, a bird to whom they told all their secrets, troubles, sorrows, and joys. To them the bird meant more than their parents even. So, when the two left home, the bird told them that if anything disastrous took place, he would go and inform them.

The Spider took the trade of a weaver, and the Ladybird that of a washerwoman.

One day, their friend came flying to the Ladybird and said, "Your mother is very ill and is on her death-bed. She wants to see you immediately." At once the Ladybird flew to her mother.

The bird then went to the Spider and said, "Your mother is very ill and she would like to see you."

But the Spider said, "I'm sorry I can't come, because I've got lots of work which I haven't yet finished."

When the Ladybird went to her mother, she was very happy to see her. She blessed her saying, "Whenever anyone sees you, they won't harm you but think of you to be pretty." But when she heard the Spider

wasn't coming, she was very angry and said, "Whenever anyone sees a Spider, they will think of him to be ugly and kill him." So saying, the mother died.

That is why when we see a ladybird, we say it is pretty and we don't harm it; but when we see a spider, we find it ugly and kill it.

Sunitha Ganapathy

A Birthday Party

There was a birthday party yesterday
Attended by many;
There were cakes and sweets
And slices of bread topped with honey!

I too was there
Though, none bothered to invite me!
I too laughed at the jokes cut
And spent the evening happily.

Everyone cried, "Happy birthday to you"—
All of them—except me!
I just stood there grinning; widely,
While everyone shouted delightedly.

Don't think I am a bad-mannered boy.
I was not invited, and
Did not join the shouting line,
Because the party was MINE!

K. R. Suresh Kumar
India

Competition for Writers of Children's Books

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK TRUST

is organising a
Competition for Writers of
Children's Books

It invites writers to send MSS
for books in English and offers
prizes of Rs. 5000, Rs. 3000 and
Rs. 2000 for the three best
entries.

The rules governing the
competition are given below.

COMPETITION RULES

1. Each entry should be an original, unpublished work, accompanied by a signed declaration by the author to this effect.
2. MSS can be on any subject of interest to children. What is required is not textbooks but books for general reading which will command children's interest. Verse or re-written folk tales, stories or legends from the classics will not be accepted.

All stories should have Indian background and should reflect Indian life.

3. Entries should be typed or neatly handwritten.
4. The manuscripts can be of any length. Age group should be specified.
5. All entries should be in ENGLISH.
6. Each entry should carry the name and full address of the competitor, written in block letters and in English.
7. A competitor may submit any number of entries.
8. All rights in the prizewinning entries will vest in the CBT.
9. The CBT reserves to itself the right not to award a particular prize if no entry is considered suitable for it.
10. Apart from those awarded prizes, other MSS may also be selected for publication. Payment for them will be made at the usual CBT rates.
11. All entries should be addressed to:—
The Editor
Children's Book Trust
Nehru House
4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi-110002
12. All entries should reach the above address by May 31, 1978.

All MSS will be carefully considered by a panel of competent judges. The Trust, however, will not be responsible for any damage or loss.

FAMOUS MYSTERIES—2:



TAVERN brawls resulting in death were not uncommon in Elizabethan England, but one squalid affair has gone down in history, regretted even to this day. Many consider it was English literature's greatest individual loss when Christopher Marlowe, poet and dramatist of genius, was murdered in circumstances that are still obscure. He was only 29 then.

Marlowe was born in Canterbury in 1564, the same year as William Shakespeare. He grew up in a city dominated by its cathedral but possessing a colourful and often brutal life within its walls. Strolling players visited it regularly and, no doubt, Marlowe conceived his passion for the theatre when he was very young.

At the age of 16, Marlowe went to Cambridge University, still largely clerical, and remained there six years. Despite his brilliance, certain mysterious absences almost cost him his final degree. However, it was made known that they were for the 'benefit of his country', probably in Queen Elizabeth's secret service!

Turning his back on the church, Marlowe then moved to London, determined to become a successful playwright. Almost immediately '*Tamurlaine*' (probably partly written at college to the neglect of divinity) brought him triumph, at the age of 23. From then on, Marlowe was to tower over the Elizabethan stage until his tragic death.



IT WAS an extraordinary achievement, for Islam was strange ground for most Elizabethans. Marlowe's own fascination with the humble Scythian shepherd's rise to fame as a mighty conqueror, his interest in the Orient, struck a deep chord in his audience. The barbaric splendour of '*Tamurlaine*' thrilled them.

Marlowe put a lot of himself in all his creations — in '*Tamurlaine*', '*Dr. Faustus*', '*The Jew of Malta*'. There was cruelty and violence in all his plays and also in his own nature. The death scene in '*Edward II*,' when the king's murderers stamp him to death on a table, is diabolically cruel.

Three themes run through Marlowe's life which could have accounted for his murder — the secret service work he was almost certainly engaged in periodically ever since Cambridge, his unorthodox views on religion, and his violence. He was once involved in a duel with an innkeeper's son, William Bradley.

His fellow-poet, Thomas Watson, whose cause Marlowe was fighting, intervened and in the ensuing struggle mortally wounded Bradley. Marlowe spent 13 days in Newgate Prison before being released and bound over. Both men were eventually pardoned, but Watson, who pleaded self-defence, had to languish in prison for five months.

CHILDREN'S WORLD

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE



SHORTLY before Marlowe's death, his dramatist friend, Thomas Kyd, was arrested. While searching his premises, the authorities found a document suggesting atheistic views. Such opinions were considered dangerous in those days and, under torture, Kyd said the documents belonged to his former room-mate, Marlowe.

A warrant was issued for Marlowe's arrest. He was found at the country mansion of his friend and patron, Sir Thomas Walsingham, a man much involved in the murky business of espionage. Strangely, Marlowe was not imprisoned, and was only required to report daily to the Privy Council until told otherwise.

Very likely, Marlowe had already appeared before their lordships when he and three companions gathered at Eleanor Bull's tavern in Deptford, near London, before ten on the morning of May 30, 1593. The company was dubious. Ingram Frizer, a man of status, had close relations with the Walsinghams, which suggests undercover activities.

Robert Poley, a double spy, had been responsible for many a dark deed, and Nicholas Skere, along with Poley, had probably earlier been involved in a plot against the Queen's life. After lunch, the four men spent the afternoon quietly walking in the garden, seemingly having much to discuss.



AT SUPPER Marlowe left the others at the table and lay down on a bed behind them. Much drink must have been consumed, and before long Marlowe and Frizer started quarrelling over the bill. Suddenly, the highly-strung poet sprang on Frizer, seizing the latter's dagger, which he wore at his back.

Marlowe hit Frizer a couple of times on the head, but although he was somewhat constricted between the other two men, Frizer succeeded in wresting his dagger back and, in doing so, inflicted a mortal wound above Marlowe's eye. At the inquest, the verdict was self-defence, and Frizer was pardoned.

Marlowe was buried the same day at the church of St. Nicholas in Deptford. While many mourned, others rejoiced — poets penned tributes to his gifts and Puritans preached sermons about his way of life and his miserable end. Others raised doubts about the official version of his end.

Marlowe's friends might have feared what he might reveal about them under torture. The leniency of the Privy Council in not imprisoning him had been remarkable, even suspicious. Had their lordships themselves been uneasy that he knew too much about them? Had there been a plot?

(Courtesy : BIS)

GHOSTS!

".....and then Lalu asked his aunt for a lemon. She laughed, a strange, vicious laugh, baring her long protruding teeth. She stretched out her hand towards the lemon tree. It was at least half-a-mile away, and aunty's hand grew longer and longer till it could reach the lemon tree. She picked the lone lemon from the tree and gave it to Lalu...."

At this point Bubu stopped his story and looked at the rapt faces around the lantern. I shifted closer to him and clung on to his shirt. Outside, the wind howled and the light of the lantern kept flickering.

Bubu was my cousin. Though just two years older than I, he was areal dare-devil and extremely brave. I was in class VI and we had gone to Hazaribagh to spend my vacation with my uncle and aunt. They lived in a big joint family, and so there were quite a number of cousins. We generally had a wonderful time—fetching water from the well, climbing trees, going for long walks, and eating mangoes and liches. The only thing I did not like about my holiday was that whenever it rained, the electricity went off and Bubu being the eldest of all was asked to entertain the others. And his way of entertaining us was by telling us blood-curdling ghost stories.

Looking at my pale face, he gave a sly grin and said, "Want a lemon?" and raised his hand. I gave a shriek, shutting my eyes in fear quite certain that his hand would grow longer and longer, like the hand of Lalu's aunt in the story.

"What a baby!" said Bubu in a taunting voice. "You don't 'really' believe in ghosts, do you?"

"Of course, not," I said in a shaky voice, my eyes shining with tears.

"Oh, but some say that ghosts do come out on full moon nights," said my cousin. "Isn't there a full moon tonight?" he added.

Luckily for me the baiting came to an end as right then grandma summoned us for dinner.

At that moment I made up my mind that I would have my revenge on Bubu. I would give him such a fright that he would never again tease me.

After dinner I spoke to Bubu. "I dare you to go round the 'Bhoot tree' seven times at midnight."

We called the big mango tree at the end of the garden the 'Bhoot tree', because Bubu said that it was haunted, and a spirit lived on it.

Bubu promptly accepted the challenge on condition that I gave up the new fountain pen I had received on my birthday. I reluctantly agreed.

I hid my mother's black sari and high-heeled slippers near the well and waited impatiently to put my plan into action.

At exactly 12 o'clock, when everyone was asleep, both of us crept out quietly. "I will wait here," I whispered when we got out of the house. "Remember, you will have to go round the tree seven times."

"O.K.," he said swallowing hard. It gladdened my heart to think that the brave Bubu was scared, for a change.

"O.K.," he said again. "Here I go," and ran towards the mango tree.

"One!" he shouted as he made his first round. Fortunately, the sky was cloudy and dark and I could not see him. So, obviously, he could also not see me. I ran to where the sari had been hidden and wrapped it round myself tightly and covered up my head as well. I hoped I looked like an Egyptian Mummy, and began to move towards the tree. I stopped in my track, my blood turning cold, for coming towards me from the other end was a white form. I was sure my eyes were playing tricks with me. I stood frozen to the ground, unable to move. The thing, which was coming towards me, was neither male nor female. It was like a big formless white cloud rushing towards me.

At last I found my voice and screamed.

Another terrible sound, which sounded like an echo of my voice, came from the creature as it fell on me. I kicked wildly, and as soon as I could free myself, I began to run. But I had draped the sari too tightly around me and fell again and began to crawl as fast as I could towards the house. The form was still beside me and I could feel its breath on my neck. I must have

been screaming all along for, suddenly, I became aware of lights and voices, my grandpa's voice demanding loudly what all the din was about, and the next moment, I heard fits of laughter from the whole family. I looked around in surprise. My surprise turned to amazement when I saw Bubu, quite red in the face, trying to struggle out of two white bedsheets, one draped around his waist and the other over his head.

Later I came to know that Bubu had been trying to play the same trick on me! Meaning to give me a real good fright, he had, earlier in the day, hidden the two sheets under the mango tree, and instead of running round the tree as he was supposed to, he had just been counting one..... two.... three..... four loudly as he dressed up. And then, when he had bumped into me, he thought that he had bumped into a real ghost and let out a shriek, which I had thought was an echo.

Hearing all the screaming and shouting, the whole family had come rushing out, only to discover Bubu and me, one wrapped in white and the other in black, both crawling madly and falling over each other in their hurry.

For days, I felt very foolish. But I am sure that brave Bubu must have felt even more so, for he never teased me again during the rest of my stay.

Rupa Gupta



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The Union Education Minister, Dr. Pratap Chandra Chunder, keenly watching the working of the model of a modern bullock-cart prepared by a student from Chittorgarh (Rajasthan).



Above: This exhibit, a multi-purpose dynamo-cum-motor, devised by a boy from Tumkur (Karnataka), shows the transformation of energy from one form to another. Below: Two exhibits from Coimbatore (Tamilnadu)—the one at left is a wind tunnel, useful in studying the effect of air in lifting an aeroplane. At right is the 'Magic Sphere'.



EXPERIMENTS

A CHILD is by nature curious to find out new things. When he succeeds, it gives him pleasure, self-satisfaction, and emotional stability. Science exhibitions provide a great opportunity to children to show how successful they are in their efforts.

In the present day, when science in its multifarious forms plays a dominant role in everyday life, these exhibitions expose and encourage scientific talents in children and make them realise the relevance of science to society and the responsibilities of the scientists of tomorrow. They help develop in children creative thinking and habit of exploration through simple, self-devised models or apparatus, and stimulate interest in science in the younger generations. Children are motivated to this out-of-school activity.

Science exhibitions, displaying models developed by school children, are catching up in a big way in India. Last year, more than 360 exhibits were displayed at the National Science Exhibition in Delhi. Earlier during the year, 27 States and Union Territories organised State-level exhibitions and some of the best models out of them subsequently came to Delhi.

For the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), which has been organising the National Science Exhibitions since 1971 and offering expertise and assistance for putting up State-level exhibitions, this is one of its efforts to popularise science among children.

A precursor to the chain of exhibitions now regularly held throughout the country

WITH SCIENCE

was the concept of Science Clubs in schools. The NCERT made a sustained effort from 1963 to develop and nurture such clubs, and by 1966, more than 2,000 secondary schools and teacher-training colleges had opened science clubs.

The first National Science Exhibition for Children was held in 1971. Since then, these exhibitions have been held every year at Teen Murti Bhawan, where the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had resided, as part of the nationwide celebrations of his birthday on November 14.

An evaluation of the participants' response conducted in 1975 revealed a desire on the part of a majority of them for a detailed account of each exhibit, to enable them to know how other children had gone about the job, with a view to improving the quality of the exhibits. This was met in the form of a booklet.

Another step taken to improve the quality of the exhibits at the National Exhibition was to select some of the best exhibits from the State fairs, for display in Delhi. This helped in inculcating a spirit of competition amongst the children to put in their best at the State-level exhibitions.

Special encouragement is being given to exhibits developed by children in rural areas. It is, therefore, no surprise that a significant number of exhibits at the National Exhibitions over the years have been on themes directly relevant to problems of rural areas.

Some of the exhibits at the 1977 National Exhibition are featured on these pages.

MARCH 1978



This double-action 'chula' prevents hot gases escaping from the main chula, so that they can be used for cooking in the second chula.



Above: The model of a steam generator was devised by a boy from Ambha (Madhya Pradesh), with the help of a pressure cooker. Below: An electric train traction system developed by primary school children of Delhi.

(Photos courtesy: NCERT)



RAMU IN ORBIT

THE STORY SO FAR

The sylvan meadows of Ootacamund, in Tamilnadu, cradling in the lush green Nilgiri mountains, suddenly echoed an alarm. It was the summer of 2077. "Bleep! Bleep! The radio telescope there had picked up some strange signals. The control room soon hummed with people. They found the signals unique. Other tracking stations in India and elsewhere were alerted. The giant telescope at Kavalur spotted something strange in the skies. The object was seen orbiting Mars. But two days later, it just disappeared! Then, suspense for four long days. Once again, it was Kavalur—spotting a star in broad daylight. Was it really a star? Wasn't it looking like a spaceship? Wasn't it resembling a star-fish?

While scientists agitatedly debated the nature of the satellite, a strange phenomenon was noticed in the Gold Fields of Kolar. The gold deposits there showed some 'signatures', presumably left by cosmic rays. Adding to the suspense was some intriguing radio noise. Was the doomsday approaching? Was the alien spacecraft in trouble? Or was it poised for an attack? The conclusion, in simple terms, was that the unusual signals meant a message for man, and perhaps the satellite was waiting for an answer. The Indian satellite 'Rohini', which had selected an elongated orbit, flashed a series of messages declaring friendship and offering any help that might be required. For some time, the spaceship went silent. Then, oddly, it began repeating the signals from Rohini!

The Rohini Mission Control reported a queer behaviour of the oscillograph. The computer printout showed new codes. When decoded, the message urged a "meeting" 1,410,000 km away from the earth! An urgent world conference in Sriharikota decided on a rendezvous with the aid of a reusable space shuttle. Preparations were then launched for sending a team of men and women to meet the alien spacecraft, now named 'Trivikrama'.

The international team of 20 scientists, including four women on board 'Cauvery' was led by Captain Venkatesh. Cosmonaut Ramu, his wife Anju, also a spacewoman, and navigator Padma made up the other Indian members.

While in 'parking orbit', Cauvery received the message that 'Trivikrama' had moved away without any warning. Were they to deorbit, asked Venkatesh. Was the adventure in space to be

called off? wondered scientists on earth. While they debated the pros and cons, on the third day, Cauvery got the warning of a solar flare. The crew and the Mission Control then conjectured the reason why the alien craft had moved away to avoid being caught in the solar flare—a clear indication of superior intelligence. The spotting of the retro-fire of Trivikrama brought in some hope of a rendezvous.

On approaching the alien spacecraft, Cauvery noticed what a huge complex it was—resembling a spiral galaxy. However, there was apparently no docking device. Nobody could guess whether there was any living being inside. Strangely, Trivikrama failed to respond to any activities projected from Cauvery. A film on the evolution of life was screened; then came great works of art, pictures of world's peoples, numbers, alphabets, mathematical symbols. No, the alien craft just did not react at all.

The Mission Control gave the go-ahead for a spacewalk and possible entry into Trivikrama. Cosmonauts Ramu and Anju got ready, and soon the space couple were actually standing on the hull of Trivikrama! They saw an array of sophisticated instrument panels and gauges inside. Though there was no visible response from Trivikrama, Cauvery noticed that whenever there was a change of display or messages, there were synchronous broadcasts from the alien spacecraft. Where the messages being transmitted to another mastercraft?

Venkatesh dramatically switched on the infrared rays on the alien spacecraft. It was as if a million headlamps had been suddenly trained on a dark night. Cauvery, understandably, received a message from Trivikrama. 'They' wanted to know more about the human brain! It became almost certain that the spacecraft had nobody inside; it was only echoing the orders from elsewhere. In a strange behaviour, Trivikrama ejected what looked like a slab. It stayed in space for some time before it began going down towards the earth, but continued to orbit along with Trivikrama. A flutter was caused by the sudden presence of another intruder in space — this time a second spacecraft from the earth. And it was chasing the slab. It even recovered it from space. Cauvery received orders: "Abandon Mission!" Had the celestial aliens turned their wrath on the earthly 'intruders'?

Now read on...

7. INSIDE AN ALIEN WORLD

THE silence was broken by a shrill cry from Anju. "Ramu! Ramu!" she shouted. It was too late. Cosmonaut Ramu, who was then on an extra vehicular activity inspecting the spacecraft, was left behind.

Normally, he would have been secured by wires to the mother ship. But since the place was so calm, he had decided to be on his own. Anju was in tears. The raised hand of Ramu receded farther and farther. Never had they felt so near to death as at that time.

"Can't he be saved?" she asked, nervously. Capt. Venkatesh said, "Yes, there is still a chance, but who can predict the rays of Trivikrama?" He did not elaborate.

Meanwhile, Ramu was calm. He wanted to die a hero's death. There was no point in being afraid of the end. After all, he had not committed any mistake. In fact, throughout his career as an astronaut, he had had a brilliant record.

But the instinct of self-preservation was quite strong. Hardly had his sensors revealed an increase in the ultra-violet ray output of the craft, when Ramu hid himself against the hull of Trivikrama and watched. The sensors soon became normal. He knew that the alien craft was not aiming at him. Anyhow, he was on his own. He thought it was better to go inside Trivikrama and face the aliens, if there were any.

He slowly floated from the hull to the edge of what looked like a huge solar panel. He could find no opening, though. But at one place, he stumbled across a switch, which opened itself with a spark. He took a long lingering look at the cosmos outside and bade farewell to the stars, staring at him. The blue half-disc, the earth, was faint. He thought he might not see these beautiful sights again, if he once went in. The opening in Trivikrama looked like a welcome arch, the like of which he had never experienced.

Ramu was at last inside the alien world. Everything was so calm and neat. Surprisingly, there was some artificial gravity. Having got used to zero-g for a long period, he felt strangely at home. He was quick to notice the rows and rows of computers;

but there was not even one seat. Wasn't there anyone on board?

After almost an hour of inactivity, he saw some green lights blinking on the console. Was it an invitation? And if so, for whom? For some "cannibals" indicating a suitable prey?

Soon, Ramu noticed a man-like creature, floating towards him. It was like a one-eyed monster, trying to walk into him straight without warning. It had no legs or hands. It did not speak. But his own sensors reported normal. That was indeed puzzling. Before he could look at it squarely in the face, it had gone. Then it occurred to him that he was merely suffering from hallucination. The realisation that it was only a figment of his imagination proved reassuring. He took out his pistol and dagger and walked farther inside. He soon began to laugh at himself. To a superior intelligence, his pistol and dagger would be just toys!

The object which completely absorbed Ramu was a detailed map etched on a panel. It showed the earth's nearest galaxy, Andromeda, at a distance of about two million light years from man. May be, the spacecraft had been there on its way to the earth.

Another picture showed an accurate mapping of the solar system. It showed the sun two-thirds of the distance away from the galactic centre towards the edge of the spiral arms, and the orbital period showed 22 million years. The diameter of man's galaxy had been correctly put at 1,00,000 light years. Ramu felt elated to see the expression of a 'lakh'—an Indian contribution—used by the superior intelligence. What is more, he found at many points on the map '300,000', which he guessed to be the approximate number of kilometres travelled by light in one second. Perhaps, even "they" were subject to the speed limit of light! Three cheers to Einstein!

It was indeed a continuous gallery of breathtaking wonder. On another panel dots, resembling planets, had been marked around two stars, within 12 light years from the earth.

Man had long ago calculated that with-

in 12 light years of the solar system, there was a fairly good chance of finding at least one earth-like planet. Such a planet could be associated with Alpha Centauri, Epsilon Eridani, 61 Cygni A and B, Epsilon Indi, and Tau Ceti—all within 12 light years.

However, Ramu could not grasp the codes embedded in what looked like a control pad. A drawing similar to hydrogen atom—the most abundant atom in the Universe—was also found. Everything was according to a set standard. Could it be the 21 centimetre wavelength of the radiation of hydrogen atom?

Before he could calculate further, he was struck by the number 27,00,000 near the solar system. It took him just a second to realise its significance. That he thought

was 90 per cent of the speed of light in kilometres and it was also the velocity at which the solar system would appear as one running away from other galaxies—a phenomenon long observed in reverse by man with regard to the other galaxies. "Their" calculations only confirmed Edwin Hubble's Law of the receding velocity of galaxies as depending upon their distance from the observer.

Such remarkable accuracy of the galaxies and some identity of views were awe-inspiring. If ever "they" chose to become offensive, the consequences would be terrible!

Mohan Sundara Rajan

(To be continued)

HOW and WHY

Satyuprakash Das (16) of Bhadrak (Orissa) wants to know: How does an air cooler work?

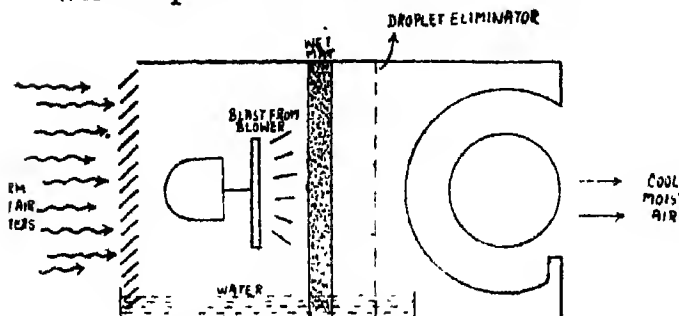
The simplest and most commonly seen form of air cooler is the evaporative type. It works on the principle that whenever a liquid evaporates from a surface, it leaves the surface cooler than before. Obviously, then, to aid cooling, we must make the liquid evaporate more quickly and efficiently.

Consider your morning cup of hot milk. If covered with the saucer, it keeps warm for some time. If you remove the saucer and blow on it, then you are able to take small sips at a time. Pour the milk into the saucer now and blow on it. It cools much faster, and you are able to take gulps of it. And if you were to pour the milk into a 'thali', the milk

cools almost instantaneously. So, you see, for efficient cooling, you need a larger surface area. An exchange of heat takes place between the liquid above the surface that had evaporated.

Basically, an air cooler is designed to suit these requirements. It consists of a blower and a mat made of wood shavings or 'khus khus' through which water keeps trickling. A stream of relatively dry air is blown through this mat, which acts as an extended surface, i.e., a surface with a large surface area. An exchange of heat takes place between the warm air and cool water droplets, and continues till the air is saturated and the air and water temperatures are equalised.

In the ordinary type of air cooler, the air is constantly changed and the water is recirculated. If the temperature of water is controlled, as by refrigeration, then the temperature of air can be controlled within wide limits. The elementary air coolers, however, can cool a room reasonably well in hot and dry climate, when the addition of water vapour to the air stream does not make the room unpleasantly humid.



Meera Ramakrishnan

(Continued from page 20)

came near the pitchers! In anger, the lion gave the smaller pitcher one kick and it went rolling out of the hut. The old woman held her husband more tightly. What if the lion kicked the bigger pitcher in which the two were hiding? They would surely roll out, and the lion would tear at them!

"Now I want to sneeze!" whispered the woodcutter to his wife.

"Oh, my god!" cried the woman softly. "You want to do so many things at the wrong time! Can't you hold up your sneeze?"

"I cannot!" cried the old man. "It's coming!"

"Then sneeze softly," advised his wife. "Cover your mouth!"

"Ouuuuuuuuuchhhhoooooo!" The woodcutter sneezed so loudly that the pitcher broke!

Daaaaaaarrrrruuuummmmmmmmm!

The lion jumped high! "Oh, my!" he cried. "What an explosion! I never knew that the old woodcutter was such a dangerous man! I must get away—far away from them!"

So saying, the lion ran away. He ran so fast that he could not stop. Soon he fell into the river and was drowned.

The old man thanked his wife for the splendid plan, and the old woman thanked her husband for having sneezed so loudly!

"It was the sneeze that had made the lion freeze!" she remarked.

(An Indian Folk Tale Retold by Kuntal Gomez)

FORM IV

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1-3-1978

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LEARNING THROUGH WORK

A SCHEME designed to help slow-learners, by making community service as part of their school work, has had encouraging results.

The scheme experimented by a high school in Sydney, Australia is for pupils who have a history of failure in normal school work and who, as a result, lack the motivation to improve.

These pupils, aged between 12 and 15, are placed in special groups and given one day a week to work on a practical project of some benefit to the school or community.

The idea is to demonstrate to the children that they can succeed in some endeavour and to improve their self-esteem to the point where they make an attempt to succeed at normal work.

Mr. Neville Luff, a teacher at the school, said it had resulted in a sharp drop in absenteeism, a marked improvement in general behaviour, absence of discipline problems, and a rise in pupil interest.

Since Mr. Luff introduced the scheme at the beginning of 1976, the 30 boys have:

- * Built a workshop and storage area at the school;
- * Built two new offices for teachers;
- * Repaired the home of an elderly pensioner;
- * Built a retaining wall at a sheltered workshop for handicapped people;
- * Repaired and improved a women's refuge; and
- * Built practice cricket pitches at the school.

They began building two tennis courts at the school, last September.

The boys are instructed in the various skills by teachers. Their curriculum is tailored to have some relevance to their practical work. Their mathematics course, for example, includes instruction on how to calculate volume and cost of materials needed for building projects. The calculations are no longer just abstract examples, but relate specifically to some project in hand.

In their science course, pupils are given instruction on the chemical composition of the materials they use, and their physical properties.

In their English course, the pupils are taught how to read technical publications such as local building regulations, how to write letters to government authorities, manufacturers and retailers, and how to write clear instructions to sub-contractors.

The course covers much the same ground as the normal academic course, although the approach and the emphasis are different.

Mr. Luff said the course demonstrated that the boys could do as well as others in some areas and it had improved their self-esteem. Many of them were going on to complete their School Certificate, which they otherwise would not have done, and all were taking a greater interest in school work.

You can see in the bottom picture on the facing page Mr. Luff supervising some boys building tennis courts at the school. In the background are the practice cricket pitches, also built by the boys.



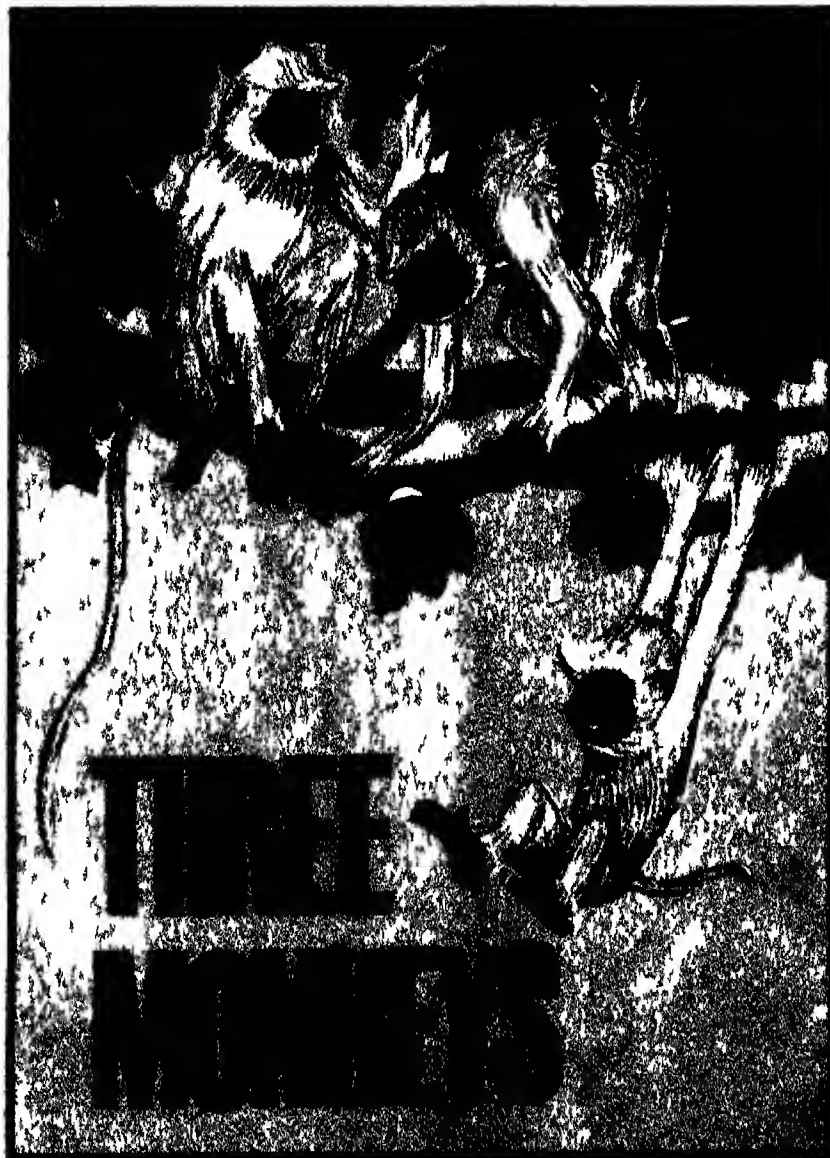
If the Sydney boys can turn work into fun, it is more fun for children (and energetic adults, too!) when they play in the 'Konkord Castle' (see picture above). This safe and exciting place is the nearest thing to an instant fairy tale castle! Built by a British firm, the complete one-piece castle is really an air bag made of tough PVC-coated nylon. It can be quickly inflated by a single-phase blower motor at fairgrounds, carnivals, and amusement parks. Each 'castle' has gay-coloured towers and battlements, mock stonework, and Gothic windows, and can be designed to fit any site. High walls are an extra safety feature. There are Knights' chargers or large castle beds to add to the fun. Deflation of the bag is also rapid, with the help of a master zip for easy dismantling.

(Courtesy: BIS and Australian Information Department)



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